

January 2026

# WY-NEWS

The student newspaper of Roosevelt High School, Wyandotte, MI



Tru Pizza Co.

Procrastination



Photo courtesy: Tru Pizza Co.



# January 2026

McKinnley Lofts

Maduro's Capture

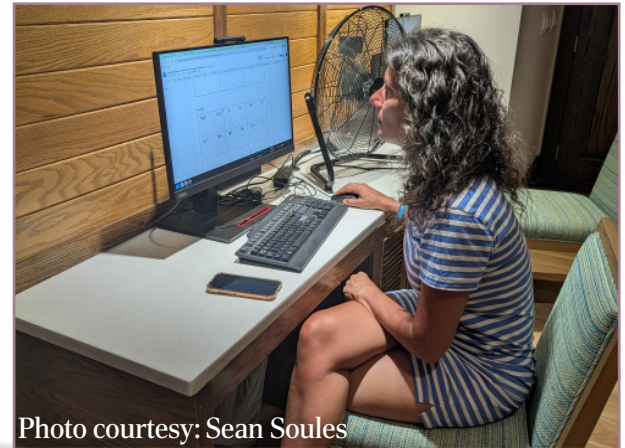
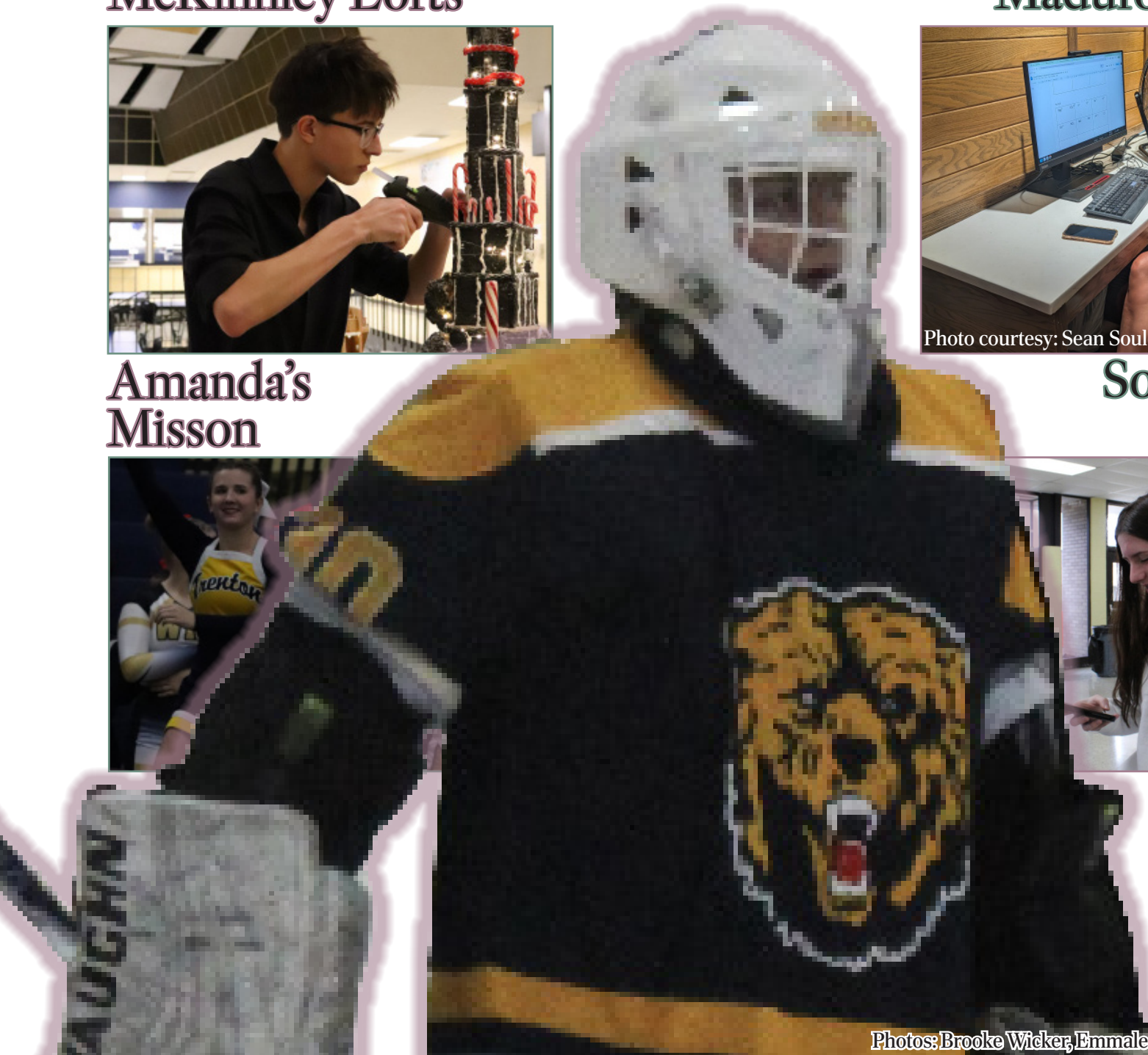
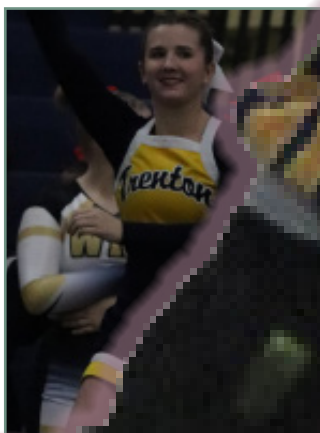


Photo courtesy: Sean Soules

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Social Media Tourism



Opinion

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# From the Editor... Now is worth remembering

Eleanor Grant, Editor-in-Chief

Now that we've been back from winter break for a few weeks, it has really started to sink in that this is my final semester of high school. Coming back from winter break was somewhat of a turning point for me; it's kind of exciting to see my graduation year every time I write the date.

It feels like senior things are actually happening. While college decisions have been on my mind for months, now that acceptances are coming out, they are a constant focal point of conversation with my friends.

Along with that excitement comes a lot of waiting. Right now, I'm still waiting to hear back from the University of Michigan, Purdue, and Georgia Tech. Those decisions feel huge, not just because they determine where I'll be next year, but because they represent the first real step towards my choices, my life.

Next year, I'll be majoring in mechanical engineering, which all of my top schools have really good programs for. In addition to engineering programs they have strong student media organizations.

One of the best decisions I made in high school was joining the Wy-News. I learned how to find my voice and how to look for a story. I've learned to appreciate and love journalism, whether it's published by our school or a national news source. Going forward, I will need to learn how to balance both of my passions, but for now, a part of that is using the time I have left on the Wy-News to write about things I really care about.

In this issue, I cover the opening of Tru Pizza Co., a completely gluten-free restaurant in downtown Wyandotte. Having a wheat allergy,

I fell in love with their food truck at the street fair. To feature the restaurant, I got to sit down with the owner and hear about how important this place is to him in the same way it affects me. Turning that care and passion into an article for everyone in my community to hear about is why journalism is so important.

I think most seniors are feeling similar mixed emotions to me: looking forward to what's coming next while savouring what they already have.

People are waiting for admissions decisions so they can finally commit to a school. They're waiting on semester grades to see where they stand academically. And they're waiting to see what these last few months with friends will look like. There's an excitement about being done with high school, paired with a desire to slow time down just a little and experience our last moments of high school.

The start of a new year also brings New Year's resolutions, something I've definitely participated in, even if I've already broken a few. In my opinion, the more goals you make, the more will work out. Instead of having one big thing I want to accomplish, I have a lot of smaller goals written out on a Bingo card that I made with friends.

In this issue, Miliany covers why people feel such a strong need to start fresh in January, and why setting goals doesn't have to be limited to one time of year. This idea is backed up by research and student ideas to show that growth doesn't run on a calendar, and you can make a change whenever you want.

This issue also highlights the depth and range of stories our staff con-



tinues to produce. Emmalee wrote a well-researched article on the McKinley neighborhood and lofts, spending significant time interviewing sources to bring new information to readers.

Riley took on a story change just after winter break to cover an issue that hits closer to home, showing that adaptability is an important skill and can allow for more meaningful coverage. And Ainslea tackles something many of us struggle with daily: procrastination, offering tips to help students start second semester strong.

We have had a small wipe-erase board all year in the newsroom that Monica updates with different countdowns. Over the year, it's tracked everything from Thanksgiving and Christmas break to publishing dates and school events. Now, it's become harder to find small things to count down to. The seniors are focused on May 15th (our last day), and honestly, the underclassmen probably care most about that day too.

Lately, I've been having to remind myself that there are closer things to look forward to and we shouldn't rush towards graduation too quickly. Winterfest is coming up, then the end of winter sports, spring break, spring sports, and prom.

As the year continues, I'm trying not to rush past the time we still have. There are a few months left to enjoy high school, and this issue reflects where we are right now. Take some time to read through these pages about things going on right now that are worth remembering.

## The Wy-News 2025-2026 Staff

The Wy-News is Roosevelt High School's student produced newspaper. Editorials and bylines columns reflect the opinions of individual columnists and not the Wy-News staff, it's advisor, the RHS administration, or student body.

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All signed letters to the staff are welcome. The Wy-News reserves the right to edit letters printed for publication. Submit letters to Ms. Haddad, Room C119 Roosevelt High School, 540 Eureka Rd. Wyandotte, MI 48192

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# The FFA: Leader Building

## How FFA's broader topics of leadership changed game

Samuel Martinez, Reporter

FFA, previously standing for Future Farmers of America, was originally made to be an agricultural based organization until the change in 1988.

"They (FFA higher-ups in charge of the foundation) don't want people to think they have to be farmers to be part of the FFA, which led to the change and it just being called FFA," FFA Advisor Jennifer Ferris said.

Nowadays, the FFA is simply a student leadership organization that, most recently, started using what they've learned in practice at different competitions here at Roosevelt all across the state.

"I'm particularly excited about the fact that the FFA provides opportunities for students to travel," Ferris said. "It's such a different experience for the students traveling around, which is really neat to me to see how they just go outside the classroom and use their skills and experiences from school in a new way."

Students can choose which contest to participate in at each location, based on their skills and their

interests.

"It never has to be job specific," Ferris said. "There's skill contests, which are more career specific, but there's leadership contests that offer many more opportunities."

While both contests are different in many ways, some parts of the program are purposely kept more broad to develop other skills that are more commonly used—like public speaking.

"All of these things are like leadership projects, in that they help the student perform in public better," Ferris said. "Speaking in public is important for many jobs, you'll always be speaking to other people."

Focusing on broader topics while also having more career driven ones lets students study what they like while enforcing the leadership skills required to succeed.

"I feel like the most important thing about FFA is learning how to be a leader

to other people," FFA Secretary Kmyah Claud said. "There's just so many real life sit-

uations where you can, like, apply your knowledge of plants to things, for example."

The changes from the FFA being a primarily farmer-based program to broader activities was met with positive feedback from all around. From the broader, less specific skills to career specific ideas, there's purposely something left for all in FFA to enjoy.

"I really just like the freedom to do what we want," FFA member Spencer Affholter said. "It's not like you're just sitting in a class, like, writing stuff down. You're actively doing something, it's really fun."



FFA members junior Savannah Layne, and seniors Allyson Wrenn and Alexis Burchel work on a botany project.

## Link Crew Helps Freshman Prepare For Final Exams

Jolie Greener, Reporter

In preparation for final exams, Link Crew members put together an all-day study session for freshmen on Friday, December 16th, to help teach about helpful study habits and offer tutoring in every subject.

"What the freshman Friday is, is just basically preparing all the freshmen for their finals, since this is a new thing for them," junior Link Crew member Ashlynn Abshire said.

For Link Crew to help underclassmen to the best of their ability, Link Crew supervisors and teachers Laura Zacker, Steve Durant and Erin Polk ask for final reviews and the answer key sheets from teachers ahead of time to catch up on material that will be studied, and every link crew member gets a sheet to check students' work.

"Students can come down at any core hour that they need extra help in," Zacker said. "We're looking for the students that are still working on their reviews, and maybe need a quiet place or a little bit of extra help, so that we can keep it to be a helpful environment."

While this has been an event at Wyandotte for many years now, a new addition this year is that along with the four main subjects such as

English, math, world history, and physics, there is now an organization section.

"The organization section is basically so they can learn how to keep all of their work organized, and learn kind of just a better way to maybe stay focused for the upcoming semester," Abshire said.

It's very common for freshmen to be unaware of what to expect for their first final exams, which tend to make up a large portion of their final grade.

"(Studying) will maybe even help them with the new semester," Abshire said. "I think I was really scared to take my finals because I wasn't sure how it was going to go, and what kind of questions would be on there, or even how long it was going to take."

Many freshmen struggle with studying before they are guided by link crew members, and it's noticed by other students.

"Lots of freshmen don't really study, and I feel like people need to start studying if they want to do good," freshman Delilah Amori said.

A concern in previous years was that some students would take the time given to mess around with friends and not focus on study-

ing. This year, Link Crew hopes to minimize the number of students to those that really need help, and aren't just trying to skip class.

"We're looking for the ones who actually want a small, quieter space and small group setting, and then our link crew leaders will be there to help every hour," Zacker said.

Before switching to being during the school day, Link Crew held an after school study session before finals called the "Cocoa and Cram" that freshmen who needed extra help could come to outside of school.

"They (Link Crew) would do a hot chocolate thing in the LMC, but then we kind of got pushed out of the LMC because of homework den, and then it was really hard for us to get the freshmen to come after school,"

Zacker said.

This project has a high turnout of students every year, and is just one of the many events Link Crew hosts to help freshmen ease into high school. Other events include freshmen orientation and a Halloween candy event.



Link Crew member senior Ashley Flores helps out a freshman.

Photo: Jolie Greener

# Childhood replaced by Artificial Intelligence

## Walt Disney changes its authentic ways due to AI

Miliany Zapata, Reporter

For many people growing up, the Walt Disney company was a great way to bring families and friends together by watching classics like *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*. But, with new technology, this experience may be diminished.

The idea of AI being introduced into Disney was to enhance digital effects, but Disney has been using scripts from writers to train AI models, threatening Disney originality as a whole, according to *pymnts.com*.

“AI is pushing the boundaries of what is art,” award-winning author Ken Liu said.

Disney and Universal said that they are suing MidJourney after they refused their cease and desist letters after MidJourney made around \$300 million in 2021 according to Jeff Baumgartner from *lightreading*.

Recently, a group of writers sued OpenAI and Meta Platforms claiming that AI models were taking over

their shows and books for further training in order to mimic the classics and create more content.

“The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence marks an important moment for our industry, and through this collaboration with OpenAI we will thoughtfully and responsibly extend the reach of our storytelling through generative AI, while respecting and protecting creators and their works,” Disney CEO Bob Iger said to ABC news.

Disney has planned to invest \$1 billion into AI, which permits them the use of AI characters, meaning that, in the near future, finding script writers and actors might not be much of an issue.

Most actors are concerned about background actors being exploited and manipulated by the use of AI, along with the ethical issues that arise with the use of AI.

“Actors, writers and directors are

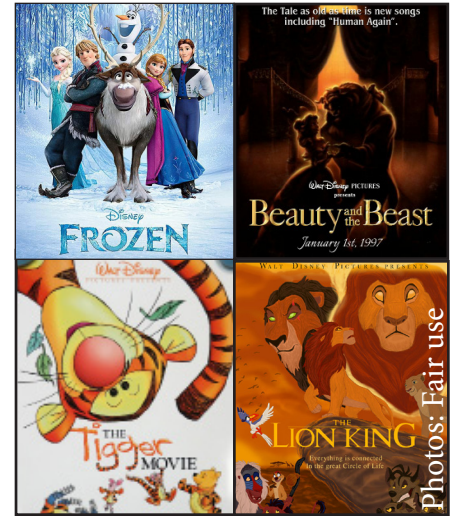
worried AI will devalue human work and jeopardize their livelihoods,” *Knives Out* director Rian Johnson said.

Although Disney uses AI, they have been fighting legal battles suing AI image generators in 2025 due to stolen content from Disney being used in MidJourney and Google.

“We are bringing this action today to protect the hard work of all the artists whose work entertains and inspires us and the significant investment we make in our content,” Kim Harris, executive vice president and general counsel of NBCU said to *Time.com*.

Along with adding AI to movies and shows, Disney is now incorporating AI into their app, making new features like “Disney GPT”, which is essentially a chatbox for people to learn more about their shows.

“Disney’s adoption of AI-driven animation tools has transformed its



The creative production of future movies like the Classic Disney movies *The Lion King* and *Frozen* are under the threat of Disney’s new use of Artificial intelligence.

creative processes,” according to a case study on *digitaldefynd*.

Disney continues to fight trying to keep up the reputation of their production company while still being up to date on modern day technology.

# Nicolas Maduro’s capture leaves effects spreading like wildfire

Riley Hodges, Reporter

On January 3rd, President Donald Trump deployed top tier military units in Venezuela in order to capture their president, Nicolas Maduro, and his wife due to alleged drug trafficking and corruption.

“The president added that both Maduro and his also-captured wife,

Cilia Flores de Maduro, will now face criminal court proceedings tied to a 2020 indictment from the U.S. Department of Justice on multiple federal charges, including narco-terrorism and drug trafficking,” *war.gov* said.

The effects of Trump’s recent decisions have spread like wildfire to other countries surrounding

Venezuela and even to the U.S.

There are many people in all surrounding countries and territories, split on whether this is truly for a good cause or rather just a way for Trump to gain control over Venezuela’s oil supply. Regardless, each country involved still has to deal with the side effects of the capture; including people here at Roosevelt.

“I had read the news about the military operation, but we didn’t realize our flight had been canceled or that Caribbean airspace had been closed, until the airline notified us,” English teacher Sean Soules said.

Soules and his wife were traveling to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands over winter break when the capture took place. They had assumed flights would continue within the next 24 hours, but as of date the Soules plus many others were able

to return home; yet there are still minor layoffs for some families.

“St. Thomas is beautiful, but once we were forced to make last-minute accommodations and prepare to be away from home and school for an unknown amount of time, it definitely stopped feeling like a vacation,” Soules said.

Many others traveling during the holidays were stuck in similar situations as well.

“The earliest flight available was Friday—six days after our original departure—and after talking with other families who were stuck as well, that seemed to be pretty typical. By the weekend, we realized that any quick way off the island was unlikely,” Soules said.

Senior Miliany Zapata shared that she also has family who are stuck directly in the middle of the mix inside Venezuela.

“I have family that travels from the Dominican Republic to Venezuela, because that is where a lot of people go for months at a time to make money,” Zapata said.

With poverty affecting roughly a third of people in the Dominican Republic, many don’t have much of a choice but to go where there are better opportunities to provide for their families, such as Venezuela.

“They’re not able to come back until everything gets cleared and

dies down, which is really bad because some of my family have kids and pets too,” Zapata said.

As well as people being temporarily setback and unable to return home, Trump has also been vocally violent towards Venezuela ever since he took control.

“President Donald Trump said the U.S. is “in charge” of Venezuela and warned its interim leader to cooperate or pay a “very big price,” NBC News said.

Trump has not only threatened Venezuela but also surrounding countries such as Greenland, Columbia and Cuba. During the U.S capture of Maduro, 32 Cubans were killed while carrying out the operation.

“Our compatriots fulfilled their duty dignifiedly and heroically and fell, after fierce resistance, in direct combat against the attackers or as a result of the bombing of the facilities,” Cuba said.

Although Maduro and his wife are accused of crimes and leading a dictatorship, the initial capture was tied to an incident almost six years ago, prompting the question of its relevance to today and if this is truly Trump trying to do the right thing.

Many questions have risen and many are left unanswered. However, Maduro’s court case will be continued in March leaving another chance for these questions to be cleared up.

Sophomore Christina Klug reads article about new information on the Maduro case.

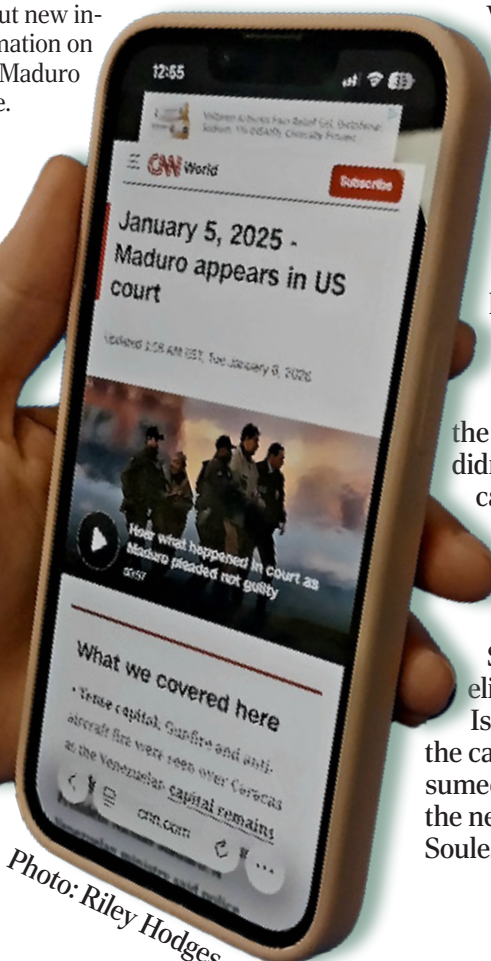


Photo: Riley Hodges

# Computer RAM Rampage

## Cost of PC parts severely increased from growth of AI

Dominic Gray, Design Editor

With the expansion of artificial intelligence over the past few years into everyday life, the demand for more powerful hardware is beginning to affect more than just tech companies. The rapid growth has led to many shortages and rising prices of some parts, making things harder and more costly for everyday consumers to upgrade or build their own technology.

“Factories are diverting leading edge DRAM capacity to meet AI needs where data centers are bidding far higher than consumer device makers,” Epic Games founder and CEO Tim Sweeney said in a post on X.

Computers rely on a variety of components, including different types of memory, storage, and graphic cards in order to function properly. As large tech companies like Amazon, Google, and Open AI rush to build AI data centers, many of these parts are being bought in bulk before everyday consumers ever get to purchase them.

“According to recent industry reports, OpenAI’s Stargate project alone has reportedly secured contracts

for up to 900,000 DRAM wafers per month, representing nearly 40% of global production capacity,” Netway Networks, an IT and cyber security company, said on their website [www.netway.com.au](http://www.netway.com.au).

One of the components most affected by these shortages is “RAM,” or random access memory. It acts as a short term memory allowing the CPU (central processing unit) to access the data quickly. According to Consumer Reports, in some cases the memory prices have tripled or quadrupled from September to November.

“I recently set out to build a small gaming PC for my living room,” Nicholas De Leon, a senior home and tech writer for Consumer Reports said on [consumerreports.org](http://consumerreports.org). “The project required a standard 32GB kit of RAM. On September 11th, that kit was selling for a reasonable \$90. By the time I placed my order on November 21st, the price had tripled to \$269.99”

Unlike search engines, AI processes huge amounts of data and math all at the same time, so hardware like graphics cards are needed to shorten

the wait for answers and responses. Along with these high-powered chips, a lot of memory is critical in storing and retrieving information quickly, which is what causes the increase of demand for computer parts.

“While CPUs can handle a variety of tasks, GPUs (Graphic Processing Units) are specifically optimized for parallel processing, making them indispensable for training neural networks,” Solix, an AI data management company, said on their website [www.solix.com](http://www.solix.com).

PC manufacturers like Dell have already had to prepare for the future of selling laptops and desktops, and with the scarcity and costs of these components, consumers can expect a price increase for nearly any kind of technology. This means that buying or upgrading any technology in the near future will be more expensive and difficult than it has been in the past.

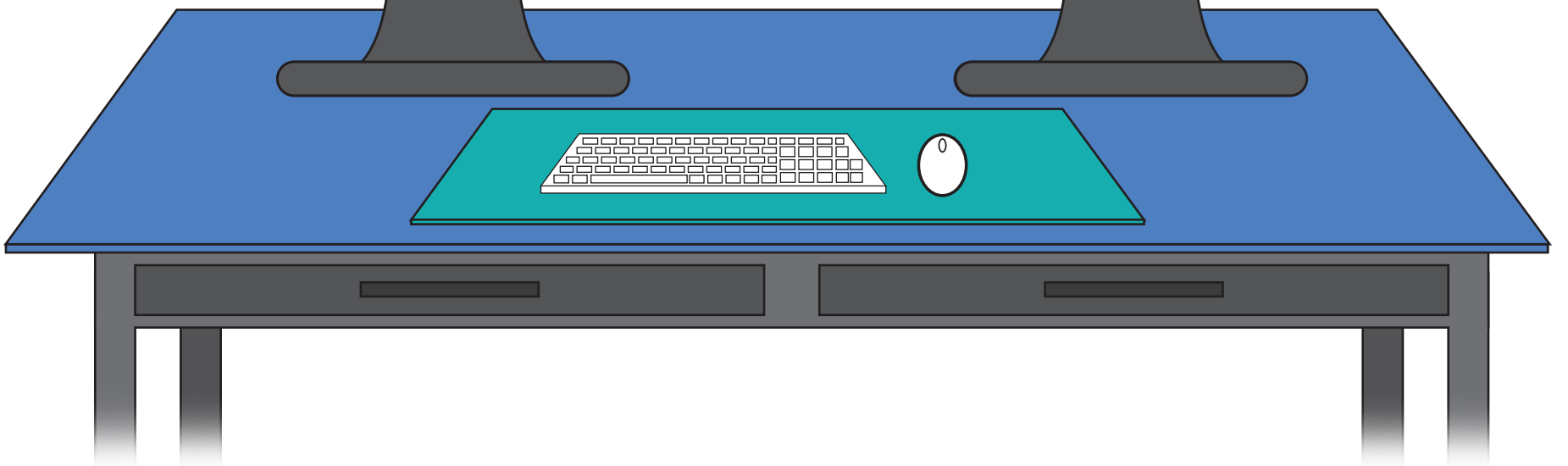
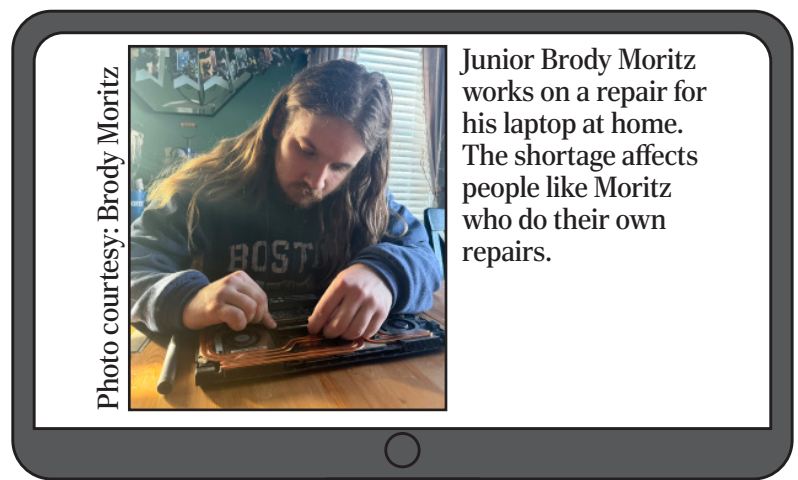
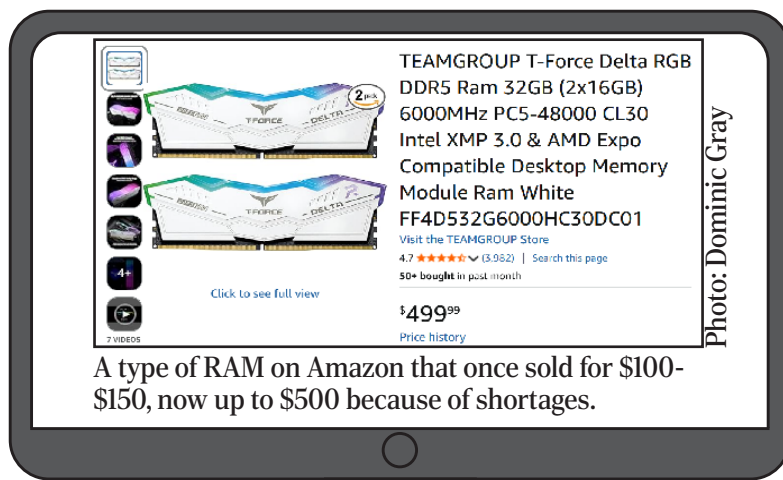
“The gaming console market may also be hit. Leaks suggest Microsoft might need to increase the price of its Xbox consoles, while Sony’s stock-

pile of RAM for the PlayStation 5 is only expected to last a couple more months,” US Daily Alert said on their website [www.usdailyalert.com](http://www.usdailyalert.com).

These shortages do not affect only desktop computers; devices like phones, tablets, laptops and gaming consoles all rely on these components too. As a result, prices for these products have also begun to rise from the shortages caused by this “AI gold rush.”

“As cloud computing giants such as Amazon and Google lock in long-term contracts with chipmakers to guarantee supply for their AI servers, makers of personal computers and smartphones are finding themselves priced out,” TechSpot, a tech news company, said on their website [www.techspot.com](http://www.techspot.com).

As large companies secure their supply of critical parts, it creates a large disparity between them and consumers trying to build and buy their own tech. This means higher prices, lower supply, and overall more frustration when trying to get tech for the foreseeable future.



# Netflix Buys Out Warner Bros, Future of Entertainment Changing

Marcus Pizzo, Reporter

Starting early December Netflix announced it has begun negotiating a merger deal with Warner Bros. offering 82.7 billion in total enterprise value, with the deal expected to be fully realized in 12 to 18 months.

“This acquisition will improve our offering and accelerate our business for decades to come... With our global reach and proven business model, we can introduce a broader audience to the worlds they (Warner Bros) create,” Co CEOs of Netflix, Ted Sarandos and Greg Peters said in Netflix’s PR newsletter.

The deal would not include some of Warner Bros. cable channels such as CNN and TNT, those companies will form a new subsidiary separate from Netflix labeled Discovery Global in quarter three of 2026.

“This separation invigorates each company by enabling them to leverage their strengths and specific financial profiles,” Warner Bros. president and CEO David Zaslav said in a Warner Bros PR statement.

Netflix isn’t the only streaming service pursuing Warner Bros. Paramount has thrown in a bid of 108 billion, although Warner Bros. has urged stockholders not to pursue them.

“The WBD board remains fully supportive of and continues to recommend Netflix’s merger agreement,” Sarandos and Peters said. “Recognizing it as the superior proposal that will deliver the greatest value to its stockholders, as well as consumers, creators and the broader entertainment industry.”

For some people, this bid for Warner Bros. could mean the entertainment industry becoming simplified, although for others the concerns of a monopoly have driven them from the service.

“I know this sounds selfish and I should probably be a bit more

informed as a consumer. I just want to be able to watch whatever I want when I want,” history teacher David Trusewicz said.

The merger doesn’t just alter the streaming landscape, but everything that happens behind the scenes as well. Both The Writers Guild of America East and West have stepped forward with a statement concerning the merger leading to a disruption of jobs and worry over lowered pay.

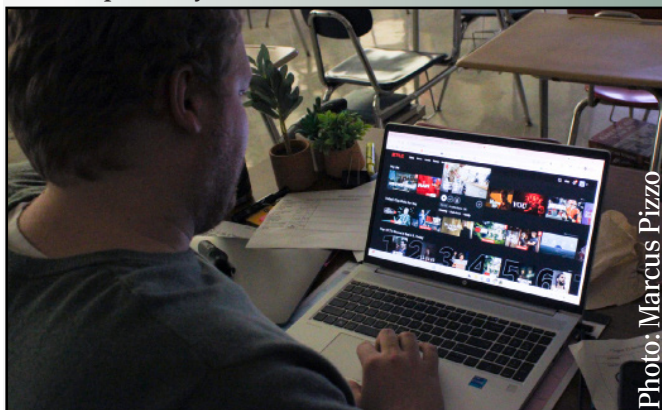
“The world’s largest streaming company swallowing one of its biggest competitors is what antitrust laws were designed to prevent,” The Writers Guild said on their website. “The outcome would eliminate jobs, push down wages, worsen conditions for all entertainment workers, and reduce the volume and diversity of all content.”

Even with some of the pushback to the merger, the plans to combine are still proceeding with one of the only hurdles left being compliance with the Securities Exchange Commission and filing their proxy statement.

“Industry workers, along with the public, are already impacted by only a few powerful companies maintaining control over what consumers can watch on television, on streaming and in theatres. This merger must be stopped,” The Writers Guild said on their website.

As more information is released about the planned merger, Netflix has created a website to track all of the news called [netflixwbtogether.com](http://netflixwbtogether.com), which details the cost of the merger and any insights a potential stockholder may need.

“It’s like with Disney+ and Hulu combining...Ultimately all it does is confuse me,” Trusewicz said. “I just want to be able to watch my shows... and it’s starting to get more difficult to.”



History and English teacher David Trusewicz scrolls on Netflix looking for something to watch during his prep hour.

Photo: Marcus Pizzo

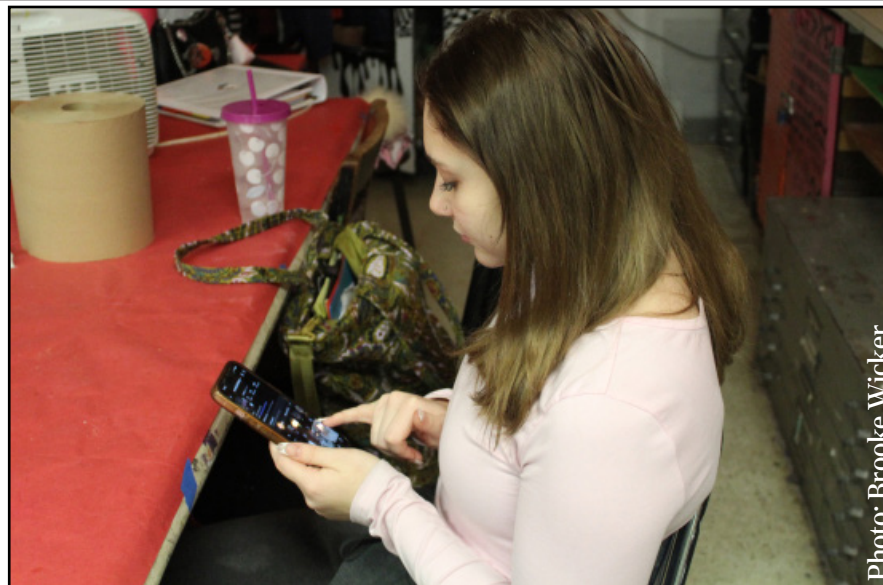


Photo: Brooke Wicker

Senior Amelia Affholter checks her social media in preparation for her international spring break trip with GeoAddicts.

## Social media footprint effects travelers entering the U.S.

Lydia Blonski, Reporter

On December 10th, 2025, the Trump administration proposed a requirement for any foreigner to show their five-year social media history before being allowed to enter the United States.

“There’s two schools of thought on this,” social studies teacher Marshall Wymore said. “One is, if I don’t have anything to hide, why do I care? For a country that is founded on the idea of liberty and freedom, then I have a question about why this is something that we’re instituting.”

“...why do I care? For a country that is founded on the idea of *liberty* and *freedom*, then I have a question about why this is something that we’re instituting.”

**-Social Studies teacher Marshall Wymore**

Earlier in the year, President Donald Trump issued an executive order that established a crackdown on the immigration process by requiring foreigners both in and out of the country to be screened more intensely.

“In order to comply with the January 2025 Executive Order 14161... CBP is adding social media as a mandatory data element for an ESTA application,” The Federal Register, published on December 10th, 2025, said.

In addition to the social media overview, the required information will also expand to other sources of data that U.S. Customs and

Border Patrol (CBP) deemed to be high value, like telephone numbers used over the last five years and email addresses used in the previous ten years. This requirement will expand to forty-two countries, including allies of the United States like France, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

“They want to make sure that somebody’s footprint in social media matches what they’re seeing on applications,” Wymore said. “I just have a hard time trying to figure out how they think it’s going to be logistically possible because of how many people come to this country.”

To carry out this proposal, the Department of Homeland Security is currently taking suggestions on this matter. There is a sixty-day period where people can submit their suggestions and comments about the new plan. The sixty day period will end on Monday, February 8th, 2026.

Because of this new requirement, it may have an effect on the already diminishing tourism in the United States.

According to Chris Michael, reporter at the Guardian, “Tourism to the US has already dropped dramatically in Trump’s second term... California tourism authorities are predicting a 9% decline in foreign visits to the state this year, while Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles reported a 50% fall in foot traffic over the summer.”

With this proposal saying it is to ensure the safety for United States citizens.

Only time will tell if the proposal will be effective or inefficient for the U.S.

# Department of Education *restructures* loan limits



Photos: Ainslea Harper

1. Social studies teacher Jacob Thorington stands in front of his class. 2. Senior Joanna Miciura reads a textbook while filling out a worksheet in Health Occupations.

Savjoah Paul-Laucer, Reporter

The Department of Education has made new limitations based on the “One Big Beautiful Bill’s” clarification of the term “professional degree,” impacting student loan limits for graduate programs.

“The definition of a ‘professional degree’ is an internal definition used by the Department [of Education] to distinguish among programs that qualify for higher loan limits, not a value judgement about the importance of programs,” a press release from the Department of Education titled *Myth vs. Fact: The Definition of Professional Degrees* said. “It has no bearing on whether a program is professional in nature or not.”

While the jobs themselves are not currently affected, the bill excludes graduate degrees in social work, education, nursing, architecture, engineering, physical therapy, audiology, accounting, business, and speech pathology in the definition of professional, which might have long-term consequences for the category of these professions in the future. Nursing no longer being considered professional has sparked conversation among healthcare professionals, especially with the current scarcity of nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists, which are roles often reserved for those with a masters in nursing.

“At a time when healthcare in our country faces a historic nurse shortage and rising demands, limiting nurses’ access to funding for graduate education threatens the very foundation of patient care,” President of the American Nurses Association Jennifer Kennedy said in a letter titled *A Statement from the American Nurses Association on Proposed Federal Loan Policy Changes*. “In many communities across the country, particularly in rural and underserved areas, advanced practice registered nurses ensure access to essential, high-quality care that would otherwise be unavailable.”

Graduate degrees will be capped at \$50,000 per year and \$200,000 overall for federal student aid. Part-time graduate students will have their aid scale in proportion to the amount of credit hours taken. Parent PLUS loans are stuck at a maximum of \$65,000 with no option for payment plans, and the Grad PLUS program is set to be cancelled entirely.

“It remains to be seen how many universities will put their money behind the value of their degrees and to what extent the new government loan restrictions might instead lead to fewer graduate students, particularly from families of limited means,” Danielle Chemtob said in an article titled *Trump Is Slashing Grad School Loans. These Companies Are Scrambling To Step In*.

There will be a new option called the Repayment Assistance Program (RAP) that will be used for new and existing borrowers starting July 1st that is intended to replace both the Grad PLUS program and the Biden-era SAVE Plan, which has stopped enrolling new members in December 2025.

“Trump, alongside the Republican-majority House and Senate, are also significantly shaping student loans by cutting the number of repayment plans available to borrowers,” Zachary Schermele and Sarah D. Wire from USA Today said in an article titled *What will student loans look like after Trump’s spending bill is signed?* “The legislation also reduces opportunities for deferments or forbearance and new limits on lending for part-time students.”

Loan limits for graduate degrees that are non-professional will remain at \$20,500, and the maximum amount of combined federal loans for undergraduate degrees will remain at \$12,500. Those who have filled out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2026-27 school year automatically have had their aid adjusted to reflect the limit changes.

Opinion

# Hear it from Harper

## The real cost of *reclassifying* professional degrees

Ainslea Harper, Copy Editor

One day, early December, I was laying in my bed scrolling through stories on Instagram. I wasn’t completely paying attention until one person’s story caught my eye: “The Department of Education no longer recognizes education as a professional degree.”

This feeling of dread spread through me. My plan for the last 7 years has been to become a teacher, and every college I applied to was as a secondary education major. I didn’t really understand what it would mean that a teaching degree isn’t “professional” anymore, but I knew it couldn’t be good.

After doing some research, the most basic answer as to why education and a few other degrees including nursing, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, and accounting are no longer considered professional degrees has to do with federal student loans. Essentially, the government doesn’t want to loan as much money to someone trying to be a teacher as they do for someone trying to be a doctor.

This stems from Trump’s “One Big Beautiful Bill,” which has also made it so that affordable loan repayment options are eliminated and the average graduate student will have to pay almost three thousand dollars a year on their loans, eliminated grad PLUS loans, and eliminated student loan relief for students who were misled by predatory institutions. Additionally, it eliminated federal funding to any program that can’t prove its graduates make a certain amount of money after graduation, affecting social service work like educators, early childhood workers, and social workers.

The biggest concern is that now that these degrees aren’t considered professional and less financial aid is given to students pursuing them, less students are going to want to major in these degrees. A lot of these careers, like nursing, are already experiencing major shortages and because of these updated terms to what is considered a “professional,” these shortages are likely to get worse. Fortunately, this change to professional degrees is affecting graduate students more than undergraduate students, but it is still likely that we will see these effects.

I can understand the reasoning. The government is looking to reduce the amount of spending and debt we have. According to a report released by the Department of Education in

2023, graduate students make up only 21% of all borrowers but are responsible for the majority of all outstanding student debt. Additionally, the government hopes that these changes will ultimately lower the cost of higher education for all students.

Unfortunately, this reasoning just isn’t fair. Federal loans are what make college accessible for so many people, and the degrees that aren’t considered professional anymore are already careers that tend to not make as much money. Add that to the fact that these students are going to have to pay more towards college, it might become impossible for some teachers to go to college and then make a livable wage.

This new policy does more than just determine financial aid. It’s sending a message about what careers are valued in this society. Teachers, counselors, social workers, and nurses are such a critical part of shaping our community, but these new changes are making it risky for a student trying to pursue these careers.

As my generation begins to plan their future, the question remains whether making education less accessible will truly benefit the country or simply push away the people it needs the most.

As it stands right now, I don’t know how much I’m going to have to pay for college or if this change is going to affect the loans I get for my undergraduate program, and I can only hope that I can get hired into a good district after graduating so that I can make a livable wage.

Ideally, I would go back to school at some point to pursue a master’s degree or higher, but if I can’t get enough student loans because an education degree isn’t considered professional anymore, how am I supposed to live off of my paycheck and pay for college at the same time? This policy has definitely made me rethink my goals in a way I never expected to.

If these careers are truly essential, then the students willing to commit their lives to them should not be left questioning whether their futures are even possible.



Photo: Monica Patterson

“It’s a beautiful building. It’s **ICONIC** and classic-looking”  
 -Developer Ron Thomas

# A New Life

## Historic Wyandotte school

*Emmalee Eskin, Managing Editor*

An old Wyandotte elementary school is being transformed into modern, affordable living.

“The McKinley school is a 59,000, almost 60,000 square foot building that was constructed between 1938 and 1940,” Downtown Development Authority Director Joseph Gruber said. “That school was operated up until about 2009.”

In 2013, the city of Wyandotte traded property in a land swap agreement with the Wyandotte Public School District. In this process, the city gained the McKinley School. Right after this land was acquired, the city immediately started the process of redeveloping the school and the land.

“We started pursuing redevelopment of that property and went through a series of develop-

ment proposals with developers between 2016 and 2021. Ultimately, the proposed McKinley development at that time basically fell apart,” Gruber said.

The first proposal for the school was senior housing for people 55 and older, then the plan changed to seniors who are 65 or older. The final proposal from this developer was a multi-building senior assisted living facility, which would have nursing staff on site.

“The neighborhood residents responded very negatively to that proposal,” Gruber said. “The reason is that...it became more of what people described as a commercial medical type of facility, and there were a lot of concerns about traffic, nursing staff, and medical vehicles coming and going.”

While the

project was in its early stages of development, the community was very vocal about what they wanted and did not want for the space.

For a long time, the Wyandotte neighborhood, where the McKinley school is located, was not a desirable place to live. Through the “Build a Future in Wyandotte” project, the city started buying old houses, demolishing them, and then combining lots to create larger plots of land. This project targeted families because they could get land in Wyandotte for an affordable price. This project was a huge success, and now the McKinley neighborhood is one of the most desirable places to live.

“So when a developer was proposing to create a rather large complex of buildings in the middle of this strong residential neighborhood, you can imagine the neighborhood residents felt negatively towards that,” Gruber said. “They wanted to preserve the hard work of

the redevelopment efforts of the community and of the neighbors who had been investing in making that neighborhood a neighborhood again.”

This set a clear goal for the development of the school: working alongside the residents and community. Preserving the building itself and enhancing the park were also very important for the community.

“As the neighborhood continued to develop over time, the school playground became like a neighborhood park. It’s not really technically part of the city of Wyandotte Parks and Recreation system, but it became like a community park,” Gruber said.

For this project, it was very important that it met the needs of the community. One developer, Ron Thomas, who owns Rise Above Ventures, had a plan that was exactly what the residents were looking for.

“He was going to preserve the McKinley School building, turn it into fifteen apartments and fifteen condominiums,” Gruber said. “He was going to construct five new homes in accor-



# for McKinley set for residential transformation

dance with the 'Build a Future in Wyandotte' program...And we were going to carve out a piece of the property to rebuild, redevelop, and establish once and for all McKinley Park as a new permanent public park and green space in the city."

This was proposed in the Summer of 2023, but Thomas was only going to move forward if he could receive a grant from the state. Thomas applied for the grant but did not receive it. But, in July 2023, there was a change in Michigan's Brownfield law: now the Brownfield activities can be about creating affordable housing, and the developer can capture more taxes back. Previously, the Brownfield laws did not have an act that supported housing. The Brownfield plan for the McKinley lofts got approved by the city and then by the state, so Thomas was able to move forward with the project.

"It's a beautiful building. It's iconic and classic-looking. It's one of these buildings that looks like it's been a part of the environment forever and will be there forever," Thomas said. "It has that classic, high-quality, nice architecture, and then even the inside is built the same way."

The McKinley school has so many unique and historical features.

One of Thomas' biggest

goals was to preserve a lot of the iconic and historical features of the building.

"That's ultimately what we did and are going to do, which is keep a lot of significant elements of the building in place because they deserve to be preserved," Thomas said.

Besides brand new windows and window frames, the outside of the school is going to remain as it looks. On the inside, the hallways and corridors are going to remain the same.

"On the second floor, there's a lot of student-made artwork, and it's basically images, pictures, paintings, sculptures of the building of the era when the school was still open," Thomas said. "We're going to keep a lot of that in place and just frame around it and protect it so when you walk down the hallway upstairs, you see a lot of these cool student art pieces of the time. It feels like you're walking back in time."

Another big goal of the project was to create modern, luxurious-feeling apartments while making sure they are something that can be used by the community.

"We want to build something that can be used by the community and the people that live and work in the area," Thomas said. "The least expensive apartments are starting at \$1,200, but there's going to be a variety of different unit

types and sizes."

The apartments and condos that will be built out of the McKinley school aren't the only thing coming out of this project. Five new homes are being built as well, and the McKinley Park will be redesigned and developed. Senior Bryan Davis has reached out to Gruber for an opportunity to work on the park. Davis has been in the architecture classes offered at Roosevelt since freshman year, and has found a passion for it.

"I work for the city in the electrical department, and I make all the electrical maps," Davis said. "I had heard about [The McKinley Park project] from talks and emails and from my parents, too. I was mentioned by Joe Gruber, who's the head of the McKinley project, and he said he had wanted a high school student or someone younger to help out on the project...I just kind of jumped at the opportunity."

Right now, the team has all of its focus on the apartments, condos, and houses that are being built, and the park is planning on starting in the Spring.

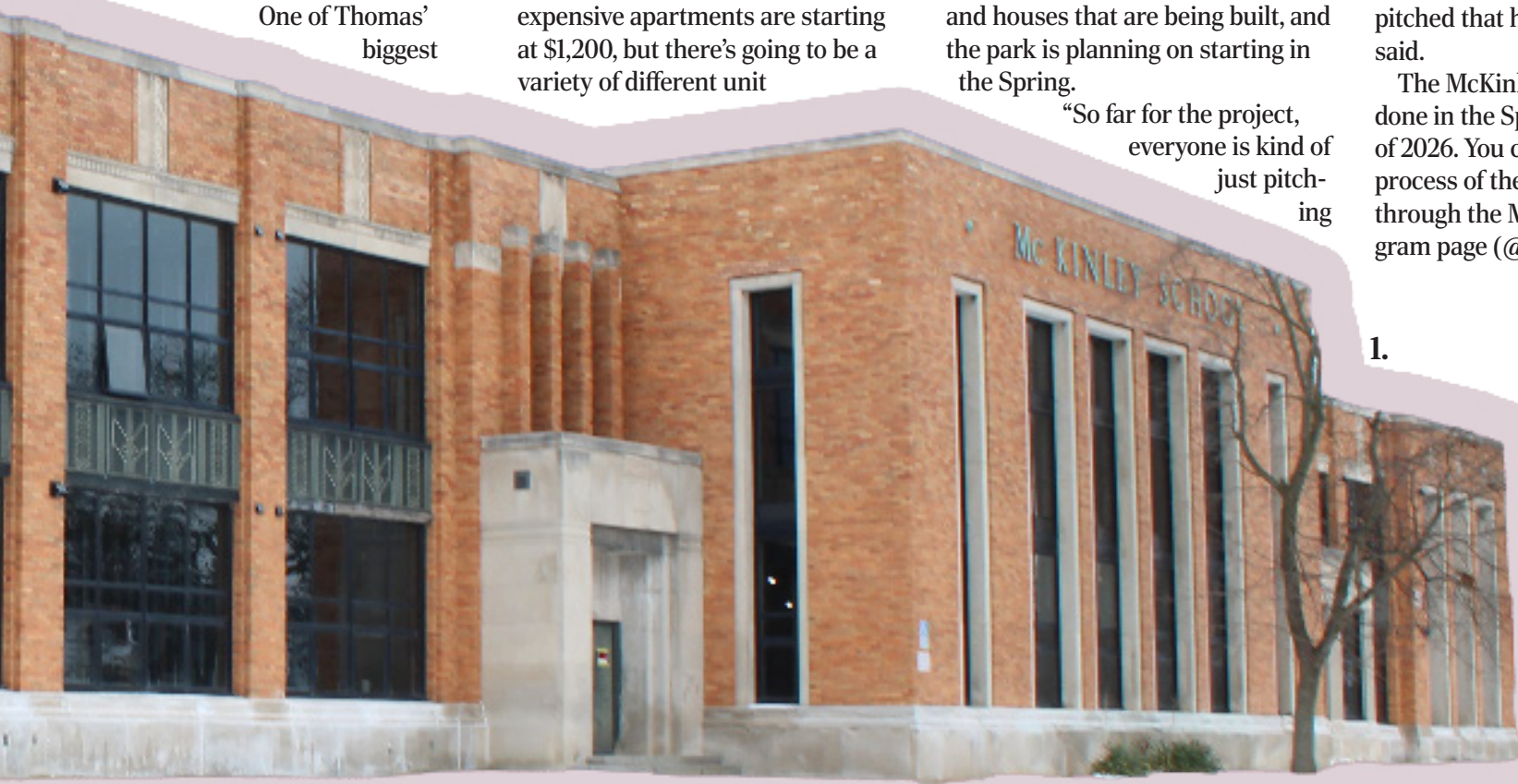
"So far for the project, everyone is kind of just pitching

ideas of where certain things should be located...like where a playground feature would be or just how much of it should be open field. Just kind of been working on and modifying the already existing plan and pitching ideas," Davis said.

Even though the team is focused so much on the park right now, Davis has contributed his interest in working on the project by pitching ideas at community open houses, where Gruber invited residents to come and offer feedback or input on the design of the park.

"I think right now the biggest thing I've done to contribute is with the theming. I think since we have the police park and the firemen park, this one we want to do more of a school theme. I kind of pitched that idea, and that's the thing that I've pitched that has kind of stuck," Davis said.

The McKinley Lofts plan is to be done in the Spring or early Summer of 2026. You can stay updated on the process of the building coming to life through the McKinley Lofts Instagram page (@McKinleylofts).



1. The McKinley school is located on Plum St. in Wyandotte, MI. The first noticeable change in transoforming the school was the new windows and window frames. 2. Three out of five of the houses that are being built with the McKinley Loft project are located on 7th street. Two more houses will be built in the surrounding area.

Opinion  
**Monica's Monocle**  
 Before resolutions, a moment of recognition

Monica Patterson, Associate Editor

The clock slowly ticked down to midnight as I heard my friends in the next room counting down, but I wasn't with them. I was nearby with my newest friend, someone I never would have expected in my life, and someone I would consider to be one of my favorite parts of 2025. The seconds ticked away as time slowed and segwayed into the new year; 2026.

As the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Day, one of the first questions people start to ask is "What's your New Year's resolution?" People usually say the same things: to eat better, to lose weight, to save money, etc. While there's nothing wrong with wanting to improve, this yearly ritual tends to skip the step to pause and recognize what we've already accomplished. Before rushing into a new list of expectations, we should give ourselves credit for progress that got us here. I've noticed nobody really pays attention to those important details.

For example, this year's New Year's Day had me motivated about what I could achieve based on what I had accomplished in 2025. Early in the year, I earned a varsity spot on my tennis team as the only sophomore. Later, I tried cross country, which I was also able to snag a well deserved varsity letter in after no prior experience. These moments weren't just luck, they were the result of sore muscles and early morning workouts.

At the time, I felt like I wasn't improving. But when I look back at the big picture, I see all I could accomplish thanks to that consistent effort. Thank you, past me.

Moments like these are easy to brush past because they don't always come with

a shiny new trophy. Progress often shows up silently after putting in effort that everyone else may not recognize. These uncelebrated choices and quiet grit shape us who we are long before seeing the results.

Things like this are proof why the new year should start with recognition, not resolution. Growth doesn't have to be flashy. You can simply be proud that you talked to somebody new, overcame a bad grade, managed stress better, or started a new hobby. It can be in the form of showing up for something consistently even with a lack of motivation or outside obstacles. It can even be letting go of something or someone negative.

Recognizing these accomplishments doesn't mean losing ambition; it does the opposite. When we acknowledge what we've already done, we build confidence, which turns into fuel for future growth. It's as if you're starting a race reflecting on how all your training had led to that moment to show it off.

Perhaps you were only able to meet your goals because of a New Year's resolution. If so, congratulations! You're unlike most of us who tell ourselves we're gonna read a minimum of thirty books this year but only end up reading five. No shame in that, life gets in the way sometimes.

So this year, instead of asking, "What do I need to fix?," we should try thinking about what we survived, what we learned, and what we accomplished. Whether it was making a team, making a friend, or making it through a tough season, those little wins matter. Carry them with you into the new year, they might just be the boost you needed to keep going.

# New year, why new me?

## Psychology behind rebranding in January

Miliany Zapata, Reporter

Many people celebrate the new year promising new habits and to learn new skills, but why does it have to be at the start of the new year?

"I feel like it's a clean slate so it's easier to add more things to your routine, it's also easier to change around this time," senior Anaya Glenn said.

Humans naturally take advantage of time changes or reasons to cut out all the negative aspects of their lives at the beginning of the new year, and consequently, places for personal growth like gyms are often really crowded at the beginning of the year.

"I want to work more, eat better, and do better in school," senior Mia Danilowicz said.

In reality, it's never too late to start new habits and incorporate new ideas during any time of the year.

"Just because it's the beginning doesn't mean you aren't able to start something in the middle of the year, it's just advertised as that," Glenn said.

According to psychologytoday.com, the new year correlates to the "Fresh Start Effect," meaning that a new year represents rebirth and freedom from

past mistakes without feeling guilty or doubtful.

Even though January is a great month for growth, realistically trying to keep up with all of the new changes could be difficult for some considering how drastic the changes could be. For example, waking up early and going to the gym, along with eating better could ultimately lead to the opposite effect of what many are trying to achieve.

"My goal is to simply declutter without setting high expectations and giving myself time to get everything done," psychology teacher Ann Robb said.

January represents new beginnings but when there is a changeover from 2025-2026 it is where people decide to rebrand and promote new ideas. In most cases, the new routine collides with reality when people go back to work or back to school and they find themselves unable to attain habits.

"People just feel like if they don't do it right the first time then it's not worth keeping up with when it comes to goals, and they feel like they should try again next year," senior Madelyn Faitel said.

The best way to follow

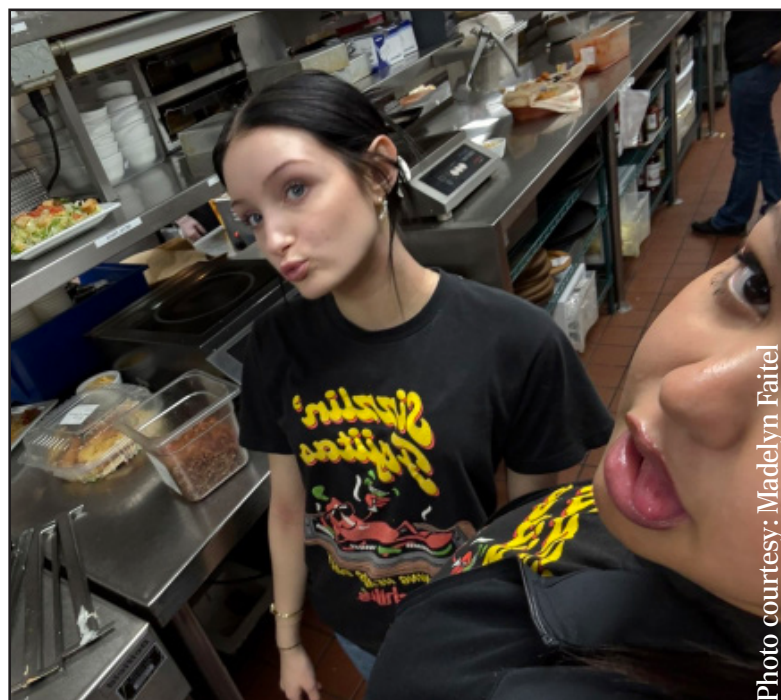
through with New Year's Resolutions is to set realistic goals, even if they seem small. For example, it's easier to follow through with a new habit like working out when you decide to go every other day instead of every single day, and there's always room to alter your goals to make them bigger once you get the hang of smaller goals.

"Most people fail their New Year's resolution goal because they set expectations way too high and they are too hard on themselves," Robb said.

Even though some might say the new year is the best time to change things up, it's never too late to set realistic goals that are achievable during a long period of time.

"This year I just want to make my life a bit easier in order for things to run smoother," Robb said.

Creating smaller tasks and watering down the meaning of words can also help trick the mind into thinking that the task isn't as big or life changing as it feels. In reality, it is all about the amount of weight you put on your goals that determine whether or not you achieve them.



Senior Madelyn Faitel works with one of her coworkers at Chili's, as a part of her new year's resolution, she wants to work more.

Photo courtesy: Madelyn Faitel

# “I’ll do it later”

## Cycle of student procrastination

Ainslea Harper, Copy Editor

Procrastination is a daily struggle for many people. When it comes to homework or studying, a lot of students are too busy, too tired, or too bored to do it.

Whatever the reason that stuff isn’t getting done, procrastination leaves serious effects on our mental health.

“We procrastinate when we know what to do, but put off doing it until later. This can lead to feelings of anxiety and guilt. It can also leave us feeling unproductive, lazy, and ineffectual. In other words, it can affect the way we feel about ourselves,” The University of Kansas Counseling and Psychological Services said.

There’s a lot of reasons why we procrastinate. From simple reasons like a lack of understanding of the task to more complex reasons like personal troubles and anxieties, the completion rate of our tasks is heavily influenced by things going on in our lives. This is especially true for students.

“In reality, procrastination is often a self-protection strategy for students. For example, if you procrastinate, then you always have the excuse of “not having

enough” time in the event that you fail, so your sense of your ability is never threatened,” Princeton University’s McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning said. “When there is so much pressure on getting a good grade on, say, a paper, it’s no wonder that students want to avoid it and so put off their work.”

However, many students have realized that their procrastination actually leads to further negative consequences.

“I procrastinate with homework way too much. It is an ongoing issue I have had for years,” sophomore Genevieve Thomas said in a Wy-News survey. “I am aware that I can do the work and get a decent grade of an A to a B-. But I often find myself low on motivation or too burnt out to do anything, causing me to procrastinate. It has been a nearly impossible cycle for me to break out of. I still procrastinate today.”

Other students who responded to the survey said something similar, that after procrastinating assignments and studying they end up getting bad grades and are left with a feeling of knowing they could’ve done better.

“I pulled an all-nighter the night before my first and second hour midterms I had to finish,” senior Damian Byrne said in the Wy-News survey. “I was so exhausted that I did poorly on both exams and got an A- in both classes that semester. It’s the only time I’ve ever gotten anything below an A.”

It is often said that procrastination is just pure laziness, but really, procrastination has been linked to mental health issues like ADHD, depression, anxiety, and poor emotional regulation like a lack of impulse control.

“In essence, procrastination is a coping mechanism—a way to sidestep discomfort temporarily—but it comes at the cost of long-term well-being and success,” insightpsychology.org said.

Temporal discounting is another reason why we procrastinate so much. Temporal discounting describes the human tendency to prefer immediate rewards over delayed rewards, even though the immediate reward tends to be smaller.

“The reward of completing a project

Seniors Damian Byrne and Alessio Vitale watch something on Byrne’s phone in AP Calculus.

weeks from now feels less motivating than the immediate gratification of watching a funny video,” insightpsychology.org said.

Studies have shown that chronic procrastination can actually alter the structure and function of the brain over time. For example, procrastination is linked to reduced grey matter in the prefrontal cortex which affects decision making and impulse control.

“Repeated procrastination strengthens neural pathways associated with avoidance, making it easier to delay tasks in the future. Conversely, pathways for discipline and focus weaken,” insightpsychology.org said. “Frequent procrastination raises cortisol levels, the body’s stress hormone, which can impair memory, focus, and overall mental health.”

While procrastination is a common struggle, it is not impossible to overcome. By learning effective strategies and developing healthier habits, it is possible to reduce procrastination and improve academic performance and mental well-being.

### Finding motivation and staying motivated



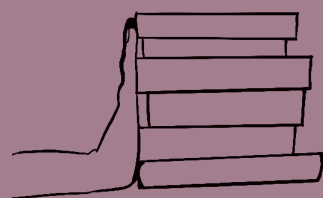
Set up a reward system for getting things done (Ex: Finish an assignment, eat a sweet treat!)



Ask teachers to help and clarification. When you know the content, it’s easier to get it done.



Identify long term goals. How will doing this assignment benefit you on the next test?



“Monitor your progress toward your goals using a goal-setting chart. Remember to *focus* on your *reasons* and your *goals*.”

-Princeton University’s McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning



Self-motivation and positive affirmations are important! The more you believe its possible, the more likely you are to do it.

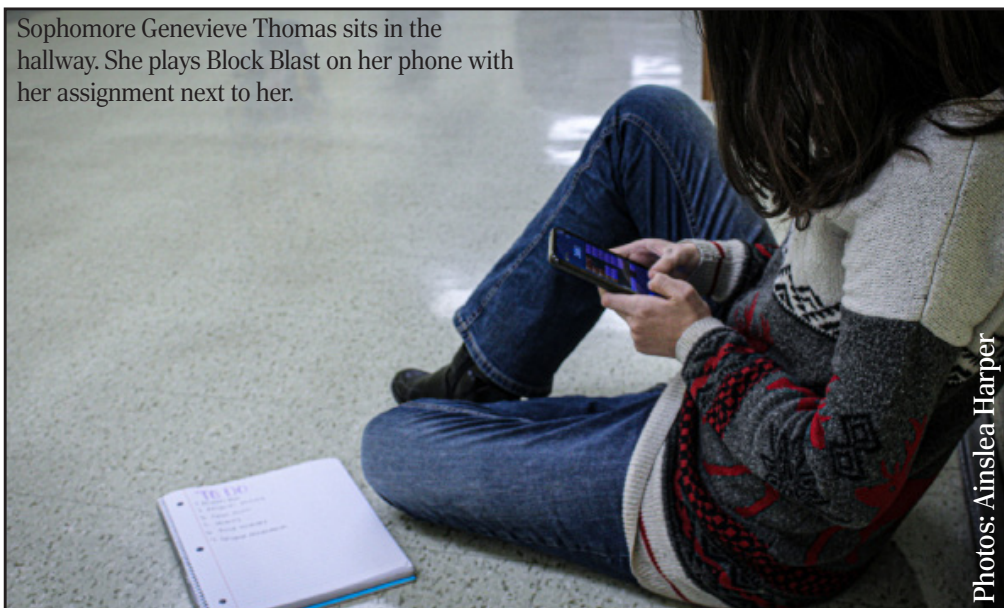


Procrastination is often rooted in emotional avoidance, so therapy, journaling, and mindfulness exercises can help with finding motivation



There is no “right time” to wait for to do assignments. The right time is now!

Sources: Princeton University’s McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning, insightpsychology.org, University of Kansas Counseling and Psychological Services; Graphic: Ainslea Harper; Illustrations: Lydia Blonski



Sophomore Genevieve Thomas sits in the hallway. She plays Block Blast on her phone with her assignment next to her.

Photos: Ainslea Harper

### Help procrastination with *Time Management*

A major part of ending procrastination is applying time management techniques. For example, writing assignments in a planner and assigning dates and times for when to work on assignments.

“[Time management techniques] that are inflexible, emphasize the magnitude of tasks and increase anxiety can actually increase procrastination and are thus counter-productive. For instance, making a huge list of “things to do” or scheduling every minute of your day may INCREASE your stress and thus procrastination. Instead, set reasonable goals (e.g. a manageable list of things to

do), break big tasks down, and give yourself flexibility and allot time to things you enjoy as rewards for work completed,” Princeton University’s McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning said.

One of the best things you can do for big assignments is to practice “chunking” “Break large tasks into small steps, scheduling each step into your planner. This makes those difficult tasks seem less overwhelming,” The University of Kansas Counseling and Psychological Services said.

Not all time management techniques will work for everyone, and planners and calendars don’t work on their own.

# Tru Pizza Co. opens doors offering *allergy-friendly* dining

Eleanor Grant, Editor-in-Chief

Tru Pizza Co., a gluten-free and allergen-friendly restaurant, recently opened in downtown Wyandotte, making dining out safer and more inclusive for those with dietary restrictions.

"This all started because my wife was diagnosed with celiac disease a few years ago," owner Anthony Cipolla said. "When she was diagnosed, it opened our eyes to the world of the allergy-friendly community."

For many families, choosing a restaurant is simple. For others, it can be stressful or even dangerous. The diagnosis of Cipolla's wife led them to see how much everyday life can be affected by dietary restrictions.

"That journey led us to Tru," Cipolla said. "When I first had Tru, I fell in love with it, and I didn't even have an allergy. So if I loved it, I had a feeling someone else would. And I felt kind of a calling to bring that to the masses."

Before opening a brick-and-mortar restaurant, Cipolla operated Tru Pizza Co. as a food truck, frequenting the parking lot at Keko Brew Co., where they built a strong relationship with the Downriver area.

"I started a food truck, and then from going all over, it allowed us to realize that the downriver community was arguably the most necessary for having this type of food," Cipolla said.

Many people with allergies or Celiac disease have to deal with not being taken seriously.

"I think it's often overlooked," Cipolla said. "It's also because of fads that happen. It doesn't get taken as seriously. And there's a difference between gluten-free and celiac safe or having a wheat allergy."

Safety is the central part of Tru Pizza Co.'s mission, and to them, it's about more than alternative menu items.

"There can't be cross-contamination, and that is such an important factor in this that I think people overlook," Cipolla said. "Celiac safe is so, so crucial, and it's different, and I'm trying to make sure people know."

For social studies teacher Jason Krajewski, who has a gluten intolerance, that need is personal. Eating out can be frustrating and limiting,



Photo: Eleanor Grant

Social studies teacher Jason Krajewski dines at Tru Pizza Co. with his family just a few days after they opened. This was not the Krajewski family's first time trying Tru's pizza since they have been to the food truck.

especially when restaurants don't fully understand the importance of taking dietary restrictions seriously.

"Believe it or not, there's a lot of places that...unless they're gonna offer salads, you know, you can get a hamburger without the bun. But then you can't eat this because of noodles. It affects eating out quite a bit," Krajewski said.

Krajewski first experienced Tru Pizza Co. when it was still operating as a food truck.

"I was lucky enough to go and eat at their food truck at the Wyandotte Street Fair," Krajewski said. "It was fantastic. When I heard they were opening a place, obviously I said, 'I need to get there.'"

As restaurants like Tru become more widespread, education and understanding happen.

"I think there's a misconception with gluten," Krajewski said. "First of all, I'm not choosing to be gluten-free. It's a medical condition. But people think gluten-free means it's gross, and it's really not."

Tru uses the same base dough for all of their pizzas, calzones, wraps, and desserts. This dough is free from all top nine allergens, making it an option for many far beyond just those with Celiac disease. For any other ingredients, transparency is the most important thing to Cipolla.

"We're strictly 100% gluten free, no cross-contamination there, and strictly 100% nut free. Then everything can be dairy-free," Cipolla said. "Now, some products like our ranch

packets and other non-in-house products that are pre-made, some of them may have soy and other things, but that's carefully disclosed."

Sophomore Zachary Greene, who has a peanut and tree nut allergy, has to take many precautions while choosing and dining at any restaurant.

"I've had a peanut allergy for as long as I can remember, probably since I was two," Greene said. "And it's affected where I've been eating, because sometimes places use peanut oil."

Every restaurant visit for a person with an allergy requires communication and trust that could be broken at any second, making moments that should be fun extremely stressful.

"I have to bring my EpiPen and say, 'Can you please note that I have a peanut and tree nut allergy?'" Greene said.

From Greene's experience at the Tru Pizza Co. food truck, he could feel this stress immediately lifted and had full confidence in what he was ordering.

"It's really reassuring," Greene said. "Some people don't like gluten-free food or peanut-free food, but it's nice because the food's good. Everyone likes it. All my friends that I've brought there so far have enjoyed it."

Cipolla has seen many people with and without allergies enjoying the food.

"The response has been absolutely insane, to the point where the food truck allowed me this next opportunity," Cipolla said. "So it's been overwhelming. We're even looking to hire more to keep up with this, which is great. It's a good problem to have, but overwhelming is the word."

For Cipolla, the work is worth it when he sees customers experience the same relief his wife once felt.

"I know the feeling my wife had when her and I would go to a restaurant, which aren't many, and get to have something, or even when we're out and get just the shock of being able to enjoy something safely,"

Cipolla said.

As Tru Pizza Co. continues to grow, Cipolla hopes it will serve as more than just a restaurant.

"I want to get more involved in community events," Cipolla said. "Do family movie nights with kids, have a

projector out there. Eventually, have live music...and host fundraising dinners or lunches."

As Tru Pizza Co. continues expanding their role in the community, its purpose remains rooted in meeting an every day need.

"There's a need," Cipolla said. "I'm glad that we can provide that here."

**"There's a need. I'm glad that we can provide that here."**

**-Owner Anthony Cipolla**

# Swimming and Striving

## Boys swim team coach Stephanie Armiak builds both team morale, its future

Lydia Blonski, Reporter

After seven years of coaching for RHS's boys' swim team, Stephanie Armiak continues to strive for improvement, not only within her team, but for Wyandotte's swim program as a whole.

"She does a very good job of keeping team morale high," junior swimmer Keegan Simmons said. "There's very few days where people are really down."

Armiak swam in school and fell in love with the sport, swimming all year long.

"I loved swimming, but I didn't love it enough to continue swimming in college," Armiak said.

Even with her devotion to the sport, her future was not in college, but rather helping others fall in love with the same sport.

"I enjoy working with and helping students," Armiak said. "I actually signed up for a lifeguarding class so that I could be lifeguard certified, so that I could volunteer and coach."

At lifeguard training, she heard from a friend that Woodhaven's swim team needed more volunteers for their program. Armiak experienced what it was to coach for a competitive team, and she was hooked.

"It was just to see if I actually wanted to do it, because I had not ever coached before," Armiak said. "I had [taught] swim lessons and things like that, but I really enjoyed the competitiveness. I enjoyed the logic and the work that went into creating workouts, like I kind of liked that as a challenge."

After a year, she became the head coach of Woodhaven's middle school team. Eventually, she was hired in Wyandotte to work in the special education department. That's when

she was offered a job by one of her former coaches, Sue Alt, who led her to love the sport.

"I had spoken with her off and on, and she said that she was considering retiring from the boys' team," Armiak said. "When that position became available, I interviewed, and I was offered the position the year that she was retiring."

When she first started working as a head coach for the boys' swim team, it was not an easy year for her or the team she led.

"My first season actually was when covid hit," Armiak said. "So yeah, there were some unique challenges with navigating the state meet because they weren't able to go."

After this challenge, Armiak was determined to build up the team for future years. One way she reached out to connect with her team and to get the team more unified was through a friendly competition between team members called the "Bear Olympics."

"I actually borrowed the concept from coach Ron Adams from when he was coaching football," Armiak said. "It's something that we do as a team, depending on the size of the team."

The Bear Olympics works by rewarding swimmers for their hard work throughout the season from a variety of activities to gain points through personal records, to easier to obtain goals like wearing Wyandotte merch to weight room practices.

"I think it's a pretty good system and encourages people to actually show up on time and put in their effort," junior swimmer Jack Kellogg said.

In the previous years, when there were more swimmers, the team would split up into smaller groups led by the captains. Then, the groups would go against each other to earn the most points for their side, with the grand prize being determined by the winners.

"Whichever team has the most points at the end of the season, they choose a reward," Armiak said. "So in the past, we've gone to a Tigers game, we've gone to an escape room, we've done dinner and an escape room. We've gone bowling. So I kind of give them options in a round-about way to keep in mind."

However, the swim team is smaller than it has been in the past. It is made up of nine members, with only one being a senior. Armiak has still found a way to incorporate the Bear Olympics by changing how it rewards its swimmers, going from putting inner teams against each other to the Olympics being based on individuals with the same consequences and rules affecting the swimmers. There is a more in-depth level system for each player.

"We have quite a few athletes that are newer to the team, so I kind of, there's a bigger disadvantage with scoring points at a meet and things like that," Armiak said. "I added [different levels] as a difference, because I didn't want it to seem that there was only one person on the team that earned this great big prize when together, we're a team, your individual points are what help you score points as a team."

As Armiak keeps expanding on the Bear Olympics, the team continues to thrive.

"It's a great way to reward people for just being a good athlete and

student," Kellogg said.

Armiak wants to keep expanding and growing the team, not only within it, but with the future swimmers that will make their way up to one day eventually join it.

"I'm seeing the efforts put in through Wildcats [swim club] and through building the middle school program," Armiak said, "because both of those programs build a high school program."

So far, her attempts to strengthen swimmers from the very beginning appear to be working, evident by the progress being made within the middle school's team.

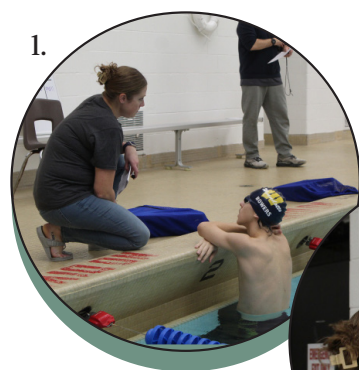
"The middle school boys team last year only had four and this year has fifteen," Armiak said. "I'm seeing the efforts put in through Wildcats and building the middle school program, because both of those programs build a high school program."

Her work isn't stopping there; she has also outreached to Wyandotte's Parks and Rec department itself.

"I was in constant contact with the Parks and Rec Department for swim lessons this past summer," Armiak said. "There's a new Parks and Rec superintendent director that I've already been in contact with about making some better improvements and offering perhaps more like open swim time and things like that in the evenings and lessons in the evenings."

Armiak continues to work both in and out of season to make the school's swim program stronger through current and future members.

"I guess I would say, when you're passionate about something, it doesn't necessarily always feel like work," Armiak said.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

1. Armiak coaches sophomore Anderson Bowers on how to improve his technique as he strives to become faster.
2. Armiak updates the leader board for the Bear Olympics.
3. The Boys Swim team claps for their teammates but also competitors as a race finishes.
4. The Bears cheer on teammates motioning for him to kick more during a race.
5. The coaches discuss the swimmers and what practices need to focus on before the next meet.

# Snow day superstitions and nostalgia that just won't melt away

Riley Hodges, Reporter

When recalling their childhood years, most people remember crazy snow day superstitions they would do in order to manifest a snow day. There are many myths, like putting a white crayon on the windowsill, or silly things such as wondering if teachers actually look forward to days off as much as students do, but what is so special about these things, and why do they bring so much nostalgia?

## Popular snow day myths:

Ice cubes are a popular item when it comes to snow day superstition. Many people believe that if they grab a few ice cubes, walk over to their toilet, and flush them, it will bring a large snowfall; others just let the ice cubes melt on their own. The myth is to either flush or melt the number of ice cubes that aligns with the number of inches wished for it to snow.

When given a survey on snow day myths, many students shared superstitions they do, such as “flushing an ice cube down the toilet and spoon under your pillow,” freshman Kaylie Mullins said.

Lots of people like to put spoons under their pillow in hopes of bringing a snow day. The spoon is supposed to serve as a symbol for a shovel, which is needed for a large amount of snow.

“This small act is meant to signify that there will be so much snow when you wake up in the morning, you will have to dig your way out,” snowbrains.com said.

Another strange but common one (especially for those who live in more elevated areas) is freezing a trail map. It is said that if you grab a trail map and freeze, the map will bring cold, and hopefully, along with it, a long-awaited snow day.

With a similar outcome, placing a white crayon on a windowsill is also a popular superstition.

Other students (when asked) remember doing rituals with their entire class, such as “Singing the snow choir snow day song,” junior Lucas Smelter said.

## Snow day nostalgia:

Thinking about these snow day superstitions brings childhood nostalgia for many high school students. As children, these moments feel much more magical. There are many students here at Roosevelt with siblings who they remember performing some of these superstitions with.

“My sister was in third grade, and I was in first. She would come home from her class, and she would be like, ‘Nola! You have to put the crayon on your windowsill!’” sophomore Nola Markley said. “We had a shared bedroom, so we put it on two of our windows right next to our beds.”

While some may take the more tame route, others preferred to follow a more extreme one in hopes of securing a day off. Markley, especially, remembers a neighbor who was definitely taking the more extreme route of superstition.

“I remember the oldest. She would come into our house, and she would do all of the rituals. Our mom would open the door, and she flushed ice cubes,” Markley said.

Others, such as sophomore Mariana Gomez, remembered creating greater bonds with her family during these manifested snow days.

“It was like two years ago, we had the four snow days. Me and my sister got a lot closer during that break because she would kind of take me everywhere, because she’s seven years older than me. It made both of us feel like little kids again,” Gomez said.

Not only are these snow day rituals fun, but when they do seem to work, they really have the power of bringing people closer.

Spoons and ice are common items when it comes to snow day superstition



Photos: Riley Hodges

Photo courtesy: Nola Markley

## Fact or myth: teachers love snow days too

Most students probably recall the classic conversations with teachers of if a snow day was likely or not. Teachers always seemed to shut down the positivity of the idea of a fun day off, but is this really how they felt?

“We never really want to get hopes up, because we feel like if we’re talking about it in class, and we’re like ‘oh yeah, there’s gonna be a snow day,’ we might not have kids come to school,” math teacher Kristina Justice said.

As a teacher, Justice shares the idea that teachers do love snow days, but have to play it off as if they aren’t super excited in case school does not close. Many students, especially younger ones, get so fixated on the idea of having a snow day that if the school is still open, many may become angry, or the attendance rate may go down, which could make it rough in the classroom.

“For sure, 1000% let me just put it out there to the world. Teachers love snow days just as much as the kids do,” Justice said.

Justice and some of the other teachers here at Roosevelt have a group chat where, in the mention of a snow day, they all cast their manifestations together and even have their own interesting ritual.

“When we think a snow day is

Younger sophomore Nola Markley and senior Fiona Markley sledding during a very long awaited and exciting snow day.

coming, what we do is we make our kids’ lunches like we bagged the lunches. I’m like, if I make lunch right now, maybe I won’t have a snow day; but if we’re like talking, I’m like, I’m gonna make my lunch right now for my kids, and then we won’t need it,” Justice said.

The proposed myth that teachers actually look forward to snow days as much as their students turns out to be fact so much as they even come up with their own superstitions!



Photo: Fair Use  
Illustration: Riley Hodges

# Back in the episode

## Stranger Things's release of final season brings nostalgia, fear to fans

Monica Patterson, Associate Editor

The Upside Down has opened once again with the release of the newest and final season of Netflix original Stranger Things.

While Netflix rolled out episodes in volumes rather than weekly installments, fans were left in suspense, which accurately mirrors the show's tension.

"It left suspense and cliffhangers. I wish each episode was released weekly, so we had something to look forward to more frequently rather than three bigger volumes," junior Ben Keast said. "But I like that they were separated."

On the other hand, senior Damian Byrne believes the show has already made its high stakes clear.

"They definitely built up the tension when they said six people were going to die at the beginning," Byrne said. "It made me so excited but

scared at the same time."

Season five proved to improve character arcs that had been building since early seasons for years.

"We saw Max go from standoffish and very closed off, very guarded," Byrne said. "Then we saw her slowly open up and go through everything that happened, especially with her brother."

Building on character development accumulates questions answered this season that tie up loose ends in previous episodes.

"Season five looks like it's supposed to be a lot like season four. It tied a lot of things together that we started to find out three seasons ago," Byrne said.

However, others believe that season five's main purpose is to entertain everything that happened all the way

back in season one.

"Season one was more involved in the Upside Down and dealt a lot with fighting," sophomore Zack Johnson said. "It was mainly based on the demographic of Stranger Things. With season five out now, they're back in the Upside Down fighting Vecna."

Despite the looming darkness, nostalgia has remained the heart of the series due to its 1980's vibe and setting.

"Season three is definitely my favorite season. I love the vibe. I love the atmosphere. It feels very nostalgic for me," Byrne said.

Even though season three proved to be a fan favorite of many, they didn't necessarily focus on the season's alternate dimension and reason for the show, the Upside Down. Season five follows the characters through secret

missions in the upside down; a nice change from what watchers are used to, and even brought back a character from season two.

"Eight seemed like such a character, but bringing her back in season five was such a shock to me," Johnson said. "I fully expected something else to be behind the door they opened to find her."

Unlike other seasons, season five was advertised as the last and final season, wrapping up a decade-long adventure in Hawkins.

As the Upside Down creeps closer, Stranger Things reminds fans why they fell in love with Hawkins in the first place. The final chapter encompassed fear, nostalgia, and one last bike ride into the unknown.

Stranger Things characters Will Byers, Mike Wheeler, Eleven, Max Mayfield, and Lucas Sinclair prepare to take down an individual infected by the Mind Flayer, one of the series main antagonists.



# Michigan's *Mad* Mandates

## Interesting laws that were once in effect around Michigan

Dominic Gray, Design Editor

From weird bans that make no sense today to rules that create more questions than answers, the state of Michigan holds some very surprising laws. While these may not be enforced much today, they offer a peek into some odd parts of the state's history.

One unusual law is a Detroit ordinance that requires putt-putt golf courses to close by 1:00 a.m. and cannot be opened again until 6:00 a.m. While it may be unclear the reasoning of this, it could have been to prevent late night noise and loitering or to prevent overly competitive midnight mini-golf rivalries from getting out of hand.

"You're telling me I can't play mini-golf at 5:59 in the morning? That's an unfair law," senior golfer Violet Mickel said.

Today, the rule is rarely enforced, with it being more of an outdated regulation rather than a serious concern for the city. Even so, it still technically remains in place, meaning that late-night golfers could still find themselves past curfew after 1:00 a.m.

Another unusual Detroit law ordinance makes it illegal to intentionally damage or destroy a radio. This law was made to protect public communications equipment, but it has broad enough wording that it could technically be applied to personal radios too.

"A person shall not willfully and maliciously cut, break, disconnect, interrupt, tap, or make any unauthorized connection with any electronic medium of communication, including the internet or a computer, computer program, computer system, or computer network, or a telephone," Michigan legislature said on their website, [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov).

Like the midnight mini-golf ordinance, this is barely enforced in everyday situations, especially when it comes to the destruction of personal radios. Still, the law remains, so smashing a radio could still potentially get you in trouble, but the law focuses primarily on public property (with wording so indistinct that it could apply to personal radios). Next time you may

want to break something, don't take it out on a radio.

This next Michigan law aims at car dealerships, banning them from selling vehicles on Sundays in 17 counties, including Wayne County. Passed in 1953, the rule applies only to counties that have a population over 130,000, which is why there are 17 that it applies to today.

"News reports from the time show the law was not pushed by religious Michiganders trying to impose their views on others but rather by car dealers who wanted the day off," [www.michigancapitol-confidential.com](http://www.michigancapitol-confidential.com) said.

The law was passed at the request of auto dealers themselves, who wanted a day off, possibly so their competitors weren't open when they weren't. More than 70 years later, the rule remains in place, leaving car lots empty and salespeople off the clock on Sundays.

Another one of Michigan's legal quirks is a rule that allows robbers to sue their intended

victims. In some cases, the law prohibits the use of booby traps and excessive or deadly force to protect property. It may sound unbelievable, but the law exists to draw a line between self-defence and serious unnecessary harm.

"A property owner may be held liable if they intentionally create hazardous conditions, such as setting traps or leaving dangerous obstacles intended to harm or deter trespassers," Cameron Law said on their website, [cameronlawlv.com](http://cameronlawlv.com).

Overall, the law exists to stop homeowners from creating dangerous booby traps, even if its intent is to stop someone from committing a crime. So while Kevin McCallister's traps from "Home Alone"

make great holiday entertainment, they could raise some serious legal concerns in real life.



Sophomore Kiera Byrne plays putt-putt in the middle of the night.



Junior Marcus Pizzo stomps on a radio. While it may be technically illegal in Detroit, it most likely wouldn't be enforced.

Opinion

# Eskin's Escapes

Diving into the world of Entertainment

## My Take on: Concert Tickets

Emmalee Eskin, Managing Editor

I love concerts so much. From picking out an outfit to going back and watching my concert videos, I love everything about them.

What I don't love about concerts is the process of getting tickets. I have only been to a few concerts because of this.

My first ever concert I went to was Harry Styles' Love on Tour. This was probably the best first concert anyone could have had, but I remember my mom fighting for her life on Ticket Master to get tickets.

We were in the very back row of the United Center in Chicago, but it was still so difficult to get tickets. The problem isn't even the number of people wanting to go to concerts; it's resellers and bots taking over the queues.

When my mom was trying to get Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour tickets, she waited in the queue for hours. By the time she got to the point where she could buy tickets, it was such a challenge to even select a seat. When she found four that were right by each other, it would sell before she could even add to the cart.

My mom is the real trooper behind all of the concerts I go to; she has Ticketmaster mastered. But, even though we were able to go to two major artists' concerts, there were many times when Ticket Master was not on our side.

My sister and I really wanted Sabrina Carpenter tickets, so we had four people, including us, sign up for a presale code. Getting a presale code means you are part of the first group of people to purchase tickets for the artist. None of us got a presale code.

By the time the tickets were open for sale to the public, it was impossible to find anything under \$200. That was insane, and I was not going to pay that much to be in the very back.



Photo: Emmalee Eskin

Graceann Eskinn Jocelyn Kovesci, Emmalee Eskinn pose before attending Harry Style's Love On Tour

My point is, bots and resellers have made it virtually impossible to buy reasonable concert tickets that are not up in the nosebleeds.

I would have gone to so many more concerts in the past two years if the tickets were more accessible, meaning I could get them for their normal price from when they were first released.

Instead, I am praying I get a presale code to be able to get good seats. Or, I would have to go on a hunt for resellers that are selling tickets, but every time, the tickets are guaranteed to be over \$200.

Now, I know that even just going to a concert is an investment. By the time you get the tickets, and then an outfit, maybe special accessories for hair, food, and the list can go on. But I don't think it's fair or right for resellers to buy up all of the tickets and then sell them for double the price. I just want to go and see my favorite artists without spending a fortune.

I am so tired of getting extremely excited for my favorite artist to go on tour just for me not to be able to go because getting tickets is so hard. Believe me, I would be at almost every concert imaginable if I could get tickets and afford them.

Let's hope that the future of concert ticket queues is not full of resellers, and the real fans can purchase tickets for the artists they love so much. But until then, I will have to survive the Great War that is Ticket Master queues.

# Ticket troubles; scalpers, monopoly, bots threaten fans' chances of seeing performers

Marcus Pizzo, Reporter

A multitude of performers are taking to the stage this year, including Megan Moroney, Cardi B, "Weird Al" Yankovic, and Florence and the Machine, but many fans are struggling to acquire tickets due to problems such as ticket scalpers.

"My one experience [Using Ticketmaster] was so good," junior Abigail Havlicsek said in the January Wy-News survey.

While some people find Ticketmaster to be an easy and helpful way to get a seat for their favorite performers, others have found nothing but problems with the service, including an unhelpful user interface, bots ticket scraping, and dynamic pricing.

"A presale should be a presale; only certain people should be able to enter, not the entire city," senior Esteban Delgado said. "I've done presale for many artists before, and I've not been able to receive a ticket. Sure, it isn't guaranteed that I'll get a ticket, but I should still have a bigger chance than the general public."

While it may be the main option, there are other places to get tickets. If you're a listener to a band that's touring, Spotify will offer you early access to tickets, and on some artists' social media, you can find special deal codes and other ways to reduce the prices or get an early ticket; however, even these sometimes aren't enough.

"Dynamic pricing isn't helping, and it (ticket prices) shoots up to almost \$1000," Delgado said.

It isn't just the fans that dislike how some of these services operate, many artists have publicly renounced working with them due to service fees, among other problems. So much concern has been raised over Ticketmaster and its parent company, Live Nation, having a

monopoly that investigations have been conducted by the U.S. Senate, as well as laws being put into place to prevent bots from scalping.

"Due to Live Nation's control across the industry, we have practically no leverage in negotiating with them. If they want to take 10 percent of the revenues and call it a faculty fee, they can, and they have," singer Clyde Lawrence said in testimony to the U.S. Senate.

As more artists discuss their grievances with Ticketmaster and Live Nation Entertainment, the current CEO of Live Nation, Michael Rapino, has taken to defending the company's problems and has said that the ticket prices are underpriced.

"Music has been under-appreciated. In sports, I joke it's like a badge of honor to spend 70 grand for a Knicks courtside [seat]," Rapino said to Vice News. "They beat me up if we charge \$800 for Beyonce."

While many focus on the monopoly, the bots, and the lawsuits currently affecting Live Nation, it's not to be forgotten that, at the end of the day, this affects fans of the music industry.

"There's no point even trying your luck for the general sale...It's such a big issue, and it's ruining concerts for everybody everywhere," Delgado said.

As of December 28th, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has signed the Taylor Swift bills, which would help prevent ticket buy-outs by prohibiting the use of bots to buy mass amounts of tickets, people caught violating this rule can face civil penalties of up to \$5,000

## 2026's Upcoming Performers



Florence and the Machine

April 13th

Everybody Scream Tour

Little Caesars Arena  
\$77 per ticket

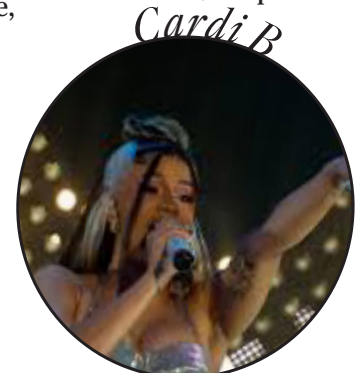


"Weird Al" Yankovic

July 3rd

Bigger and Weirder Tour

Pine Knob  
\$100 per ticket



Cardi B

March 15th

Little Miss Drama Tour

Little Caesars Arena  
\$119 per ticket

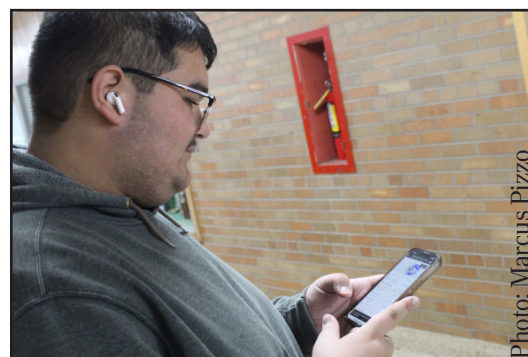


Photo: Marcus Pizzo

Senior Esteban Delgado scrolls Ticketmaster on his phone. Delgado has struggled in the past to get tickets for Lady Gaga.

Photos: fair use

# Involving yourself in *community theater*

## How *community theater* can become your new hobby

Savjoah Paul-Laucer, Reporter

The Downriver Actors Guild, also known as the DAG, is home to actors, backstage crew, and enjoyers of the arts alike, and can be a great opportunity to get involved and connect with the community.

“I think theater is a great community to be a part of. It’s very supportive,” DAG recording secretary and RHS teacher Makena Shell said. “It’s where everybody who doesn’t fit into a group goes to feel a part of something, and it absolutely has that effect.”

The DAG is located in downtown Wyandotte and has been performing a variety of plays and musicals for 30 years. The Second Street Performing Arts Center is their main base of operation, where they hold live music concerts, theater education, and performances for all ages.

“They’re an incredible theater. They have really good people, really good choreographers,” junior Zoey Gonzalez, RHS student and two-time performer at DAG, said. “It’s just kind of like a family.”

Aspiring actors of all ages are able to sign up for plays that take place throughout the year. Currently, *High School Musical: On Stage!*, *The Lightning Thief*, *Annie*, and *Cabaret* are in production, with shows beginning as early as February 20th. Previous experience is welcome, but not

necessary, and there are a number of resources available both on the DAG’s website and the internet.

“If you’re doing something that involves only six people, that’s gonna tend to be more advanced for the most part. Big shows will be something where anyone can go on to perform,” Acting Vice President of the DAG and RHS choir teacher Gerald Hymer said. “There’s many different ways to get involved, whether you’re a beginner or you’re more upper level.”

There are many other theater troupes downriver that have productions throughout the year as well: the Southgate Community Players are performing *You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown* in February, and the Downriver Youth Performing Arts Center in Trenton has multiple shows as well as a summer program available for actors K-8.

“Being able to network and connect with a bunch of different people that you otherwise wouldn’t be able to see is great,” Hymer said. “I did theater at a young age, and I met people who were fairly older than me, and I still talk to those people to this day. It’s nice to be able to connect and work with those people down the line as I get older too.”

While acting is often the primary association with theater, there are

also a number of off-stage roles that might be of interest to people who might not be comfortable in the spotlight; lighting, stagehand, and scenic design are among the many tech crews that help make a production possible.

“I got my start from learning how to run the sound board, and I eventually worked my way up,” Shell said. “We have areas like marketing...running lights, sound, stage managing, costumes, props, pretty much anything you can think of, you can be a part of.”

Most shows, depending on their size, run from 14 to 17 weeks at a time. Actors spend the most time at rehearsals, while the crew typically has set days or deadlines to get their responsibilities done. For those unsure, trying out as crew before joining as cast could serve as a trial run of sorts before committing fully.

“Just go for it. Before I did *Shrek*, I had really bad stage fright, but if you don’t just try, you’ll lose the chance to do something great,” Gonzalez said. “It’s 100% a great hobby to have, and it helps you grow as a person and get more confidence.”

Cast and crew aren’t the only people who make shows happen— after

all, what is a performance without an audience? Attending shows, inviting friends and family to productions, and spreading the word about the Downriver Actors Guild is the easiest way to get started with the community.

“Go see shows,” Hymer said. “You know, whether it’s on stage or, you know, behind the stage, or doing tech and whatnot. Just get yourself out there and do it. That’s the best thing.”



Photo courtesy: Section 12 Photography

Left: Sophomore Carissa Kennedy and freshman Violet Hilaski performing in *Hadestown*: Teen Edition in September 2025. Both students are performing in *Shrek: the Musical* this upcoming spring.

Right: Makena Shell performing in *Disenchanted* January 2025. Shell has been performing in DAG since 2019, and is the Roosevelt Theater Company’s producer and choreographer.



# Shining *Without* Spotlight

Jolie Greener, Reporter

When the hockey team took on Grand Rapids Christian High School as their second game of the season, Evan Kelly didn't expect to see the ice as his first time being a freshman goalkeeper. During the intense match, Wyandotte faced many failed attempts at protecting the net before Kelly was put into the game, to which he played a "72 game," where he prevented 72 goals from getting past him. While the bears ended up losing 0-6, moments like these are what sets junior goalkeeper Evan Kelly apart as a goalie who can push through physical and mental challenges.

"I started when I was about six, I started as a player, like a forward, and then they asked if I wanted to play goalie," Kelly said. "So I switched, and I liked it. And ever since, I've been a goalie."

Kelly's love for the game has supported his journey in hockey. Upholding the position isn't easy, but Kelly's dad aids him, starting with supporting the initial decision to become a goalkeeper.

"My dad, he asked me if I wanted to try it, and he told me if I liked it, I could stick with it. And so he was

kind of my inspiration for being a goalie," Kelly said.

Kelly's family has also always been a huge support in his life when it comes to the sport. His twin brother, junior Hayden Kelly, was once a former teammate and now cheers him on, alongside their father, as E. Kelly accomplishes his goals and guides Roosevelt to success.

"Our dad (impacts his career) by watching him, making sure he's good, all that stuff," H. Kelly said.

Helping lead last year's hockey team to a record of 11-12, compared to the previous year's record of 5-18, E. Kelly demonstrates that he can help the prosperity of the team by supporting his teammates and allowing as few goals as possible to get through him.

For three games, E. Kelly allowed only one goal in on the Bear's three game win streak. Because of his performance and incredible stats, E. Kelly was named athlete of the week at RHS. He has also earned many other titles, such as Most Valuable Player, and during his travel season, he was a state finalist.

Off the ice, E. Kelly's passion and friendliness carry over, and he cre-

ates important relationships with his teammates, such as junior left wing Elijah Harrel.

"He's a great person, on and off the ice," Harrel said. "On the ice, he's really in his own world, because he's like, doing different stuff than us all the time. But off the ice, he's just really kind to people and really nice and funny."

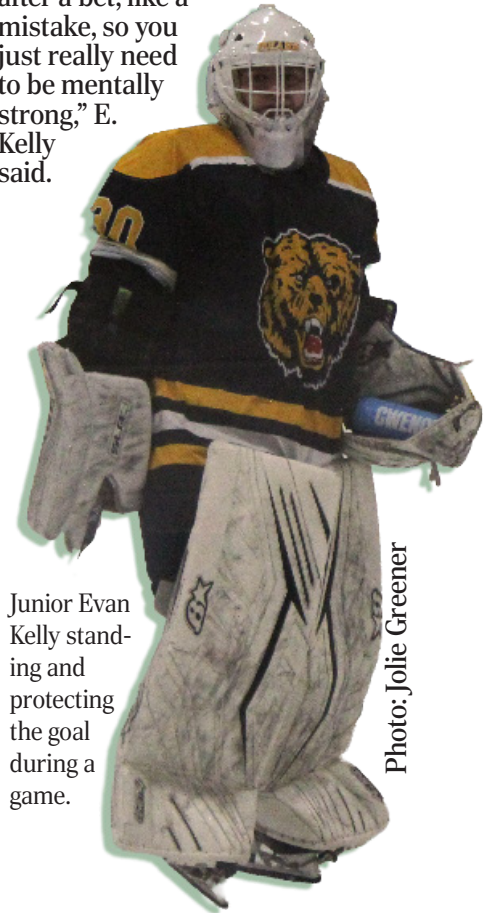
Being relied on by an entire team isn't easy, especially while you're separated from the rest of the team for the majority of the time. But many of E. Kelly's teammates recognize the load he carries to reach triumph and support him through the mental challenges, no matter what.

"It's (being a goalkeeper) really like a mental game, because you're always getting shots at you no matter what. Even if it's not a lot, you're just always at the net, and you have to face the same amount of shots almost every game," Harrel said.

While continuing to excel in high school sports, E. Kelly aspires to play beyond college, and there are many things he plans to work on to achieve that goal.

"You have to have good hand-eye coordination. You have to be

really mental. You can't get down after a bet, like a mistake, so you just really need to be mentally strong," E. Kelly said.



Junior Evan Kelly standing and protecting the goal during a game.

Photo: Jolie Greener

## One *Competition*, One *Mission*

Photoshop AI

### Raising money while honoring former cheerleader for scholarship funds

Brooke Wicker, Reporter

On December 20, 2025 the Second annual Amanda's Mission Cheer Competition took place, honoring former cheerleader Amanda Kish.

"Amanda's Family is really involved [with the set up] since her older sister [Samartha Kish] went through the cheer program as well. So our head coach, Bobby, works with Amanda's Mom Frannie who runs the entire Amanda's Mission orga-

nization to set up the event," Varsity Assistant Coach Taylor Amos said. "Frannie and Bobby work together to send out the invites to different high schools so that their cheer teams could come. Then the night before, our varsity team, Amanda's friends, and her family came to set up everything from decorations to merch."

This competition takes place to honor and raise money for the

Amanda's Mission scholarship in honor of Kish, a cheer alumna who tragically lost her life after a car accident. Kish was a cheerleader in the Wyandotte Indians, at Wilson, and the varsity team at Roosevelt.

"I know Amanda loved cheerleading... She loved everything about the cheer program. She just loved cheer in general really," Amos said. "I think having a competition dedicated to her really embodies

her love and passion for the sport. Everything at the competition is pink and red, which were her favorite colors, and what her family uses to represent Amanda. So the entire school turns pink and red for the day and we place photos and mementos of her around."

Wrapping up the morning, Wyandotte took first place with a score of 731.10, with runner-up Trenton scoring 651.58 for the varsity level.

"We did good at the competition. We got first, and we really wanted to win for Amanda. This competition is always really important to our team," junior Lennan Hamel said.

The Amanda's Mission competition works to directly provide scholarship money to senior cheerleaders from the competition.

The organization works to raise money through selling merchandise, concessions, and team registration fees.

"I hope in the future this competition will grow so that even more people can have the opportunity to win money from the scholarships that are raised through the competition," senior Cheyenne Adkins said.

Looking to the future, there are high hopes for the continued growth of the competition to benefit more cheerleaders around Michigan and spread Amanda's passion for cheerleading.

"Moving forward, I hope we get more teams involved in the competition. I think it's really important to Frannie to give back to the community of cheerleading," Amos said. "This year we didn't have a lot of other teams aside from Wyandotte. So I hope we can see more teams from downriver, that way Frannie and her family can give back to the community more."

Outside of the competition Amanda's Mission hosts a variety of community events.

"They also do an annual golf tournament which helps fund the program, they also do different fundraisers throughout the year, and sponsor different events and teams at Roosevelt like the cheer team," Amos said.

Each year Amanda's Mission is pushing to keep Kish's story alive through cheer and other community related activities.



Senior cheerleaders Kate Buckley and Kylie Harmer performing during the annual Amanda's Mission Cheer

Photo: Brooke Wicker