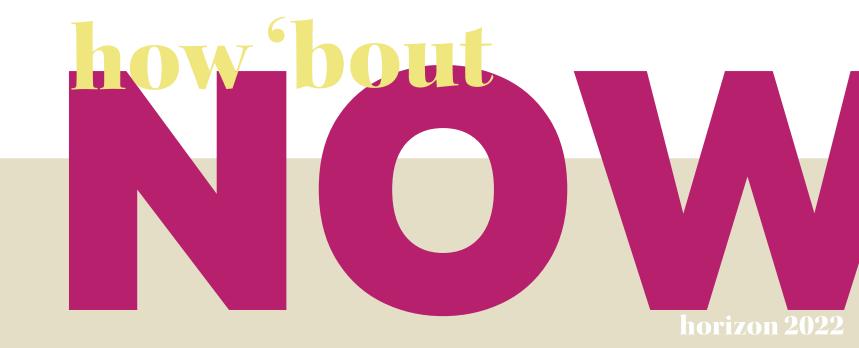
BLUE VALLEY NORTHWEST H overland park, kan.



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We are finally back.

We walked over the numbers "2022" painted in purple and black on the sidewalk as we entered through the front doors on Aug. 18 not knowing what to expect.

Long gone are the days of hybrid and A or B days.
No longer divided, we are now truly #ONENW.

It was a year of firsts
... or at least the first in two years.

You could feel the heat from the flames as you watched a sign reading "BEAT SW" light ablaze at the Homecoming bonfire.
We can't forget the roar of the student section as cheer earned the state title,

again.
A blur of purple, white and black rushed the field as football took the state championship.

Now, that's a first.

We watched as junior Demarkus
Darensbourg pushed his shopping
cart down the hall on Anything But
A Backpack Day.

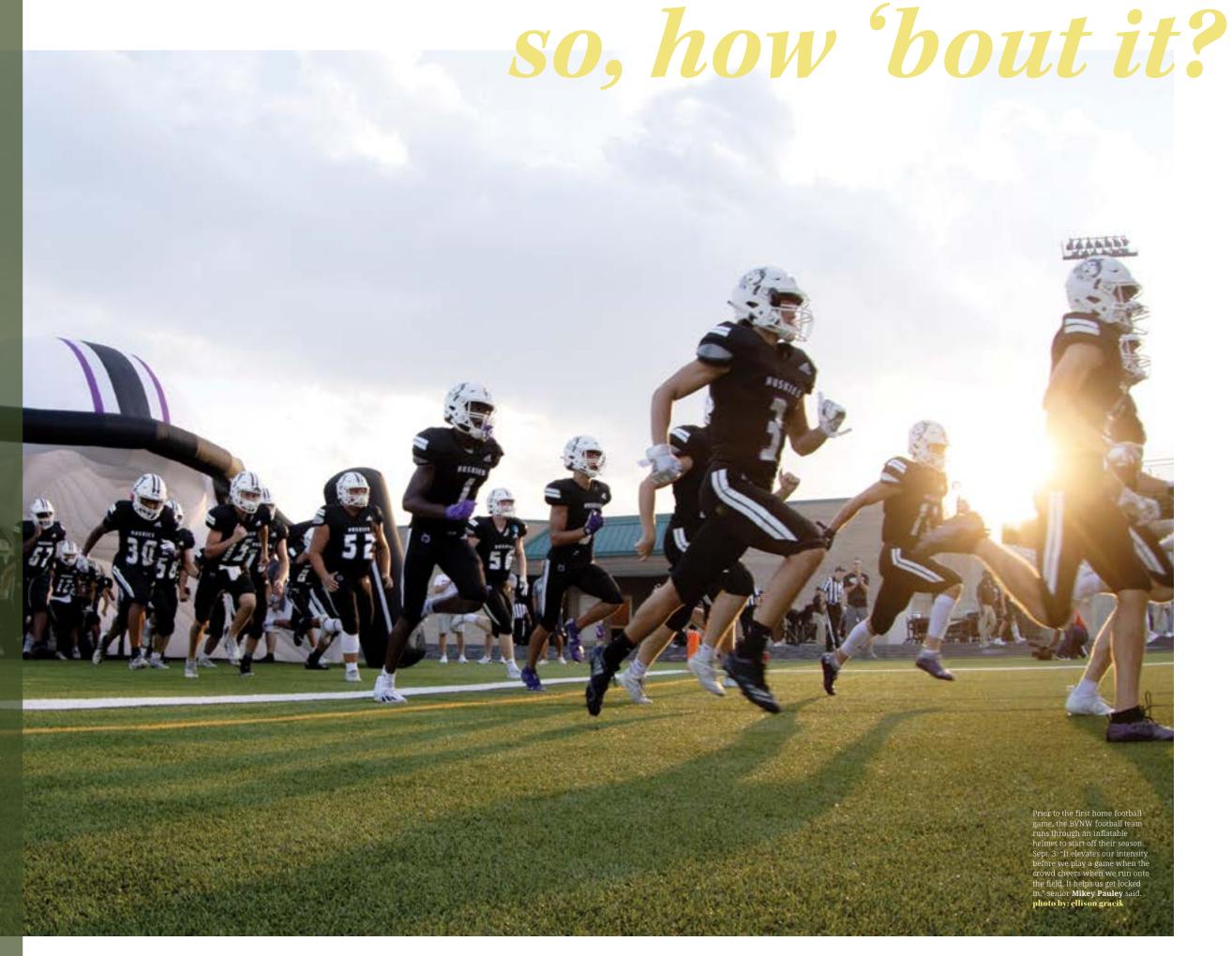
How he got it up the stairs, we aren't sure.

We felt the sweat dripping down our necks as we stood in the stands of the DAC for the first assembly of the year.

We screamed until our voices were hoarse as senior cheerleader Sophia Steiner led the "We Got Spirit" chant. Of course, that is if you chose to brave the heat instead of staying in the air conditioned commons.

We finally returned to normalcy ... sort of.
We all agree;

it's 'bout time.





We left behind the "unprecedented times" and learned to appreciate the little things.

We walked into first hour AP physics and smelled the aroma of **Mr. Petersen's** coffee brewing.

We puzzled over the Wordle as we sat down at a lunch table in the atrium, finally not "six" feet apart.

We lugged around an extra backpack, so we had food for **Sr. Turner's** Spanish class fiesta and shoes for soccer practice.

This year we really saw each other without the masks.
We saw the **other half.**The other half of people's faces.
The other half of our class.
The other half of Northwest.

Now, that was a breath of fresh air.

We had more than a year of normalcy taken from us.
When can we **reclaim** our high school experience?

how bout



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WILLIAM WAXMAN 9

"The worst part of October was the modified Husky Halftime. You had to wait in line and then you did not get much time to eat."

KATELYN GAU 11

"In my math class there is this one pumpkin-scented candle that always makes me think of October. It makes me think of these pumpkin muffins that are really good and only come out in October and gets me excited for the month."

CAMERON LYNN 11

"My favorite memory was marching band. This month was really the most we had for marching band. We had a lot of competitions and a lot of fun experiences. We had a competition at Kansas State University and it was pretty fun. We got ones in all categories, which is really good. It was just a lot of fun performing at the stadium."

ISAIAH EDMONDS 12

"October changed my study habits a lot, because I had to get back into studying for math tests, but I really like the way it has changed me. I feel like I'm getting closer to being ready for college."

ADDISON NOVAK 9

"The energy at school is always fun and people are always talking about their costumes and what parties they are going to, and what they are going to do and that is always fun. I felt disconnected last year, whereas this year I felt super loved and connected to the month of October."

MARIN ADAMS 10

"I think it was stressful but exciting at the same time. I think it was because the school work load really picked up and a lot of extracurriculars got started."





Despite the uncertainty, we **never** backed down.

We made ourselves heard.

From shouting in the stands as junior **Grant Stubblefield** dunked the ball in the state semi-final playoff game against No. 1 seed Lawrence Free State, to senior **Kyra Bugg** standing amongst other protesters chanting and holding a sign that read "No means no."

It was all a bit exhausting.
We actually had to get out
of bed for class; although
it didn't stop us from
wearing our PJs to school.
Some students packed
their lunch bags with a
Celsius for a much needed
boost to get through the
day.

Others tried to sneak a quick nap before sixth hour, in hopes we wouldn't end up on @bvnw_sleeps.

We **groaned** as the seniors found out the senior lot would be taken away due to the construction of the new gym.
We **laughed** and danced together, the sleep still in our eyes during 8 a.m. spirit skits.

HEAR US

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Things aren't completely back to **how** they were, and they never will be.

So, **how 'bout** we establish the new normal?

New traditions, new expectations.

Seniors now etch their names with black and silver Sharpie into the blue "2022" painted in the flex space.

Senior **Drew Kaufman** raises another new spirit stick into the air as he leads the stands through the "I Believe" chant. We watch as STUGO sponsor Ms. Derks lifts the tape off the freshly painted Unity Wall. There now seems to be a stronger sense of unity within the Northwest community than ever before.

Some of these new additions are more frustrating than others.

Hearing the constant dings of e-hallpasses being created in **Mrs. Deffer**'s 4th hour AP statistics class. Husky Halftime being taken away and replaced by Academic Support Time. A line of tardy students filing into the auditorium at 7:30 a.m. each even day to serve their detention.

Not everything was ideal, but we did our best with what we were given.

FOR A CHANGE?

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