



the harbinger.

SHAWNEE MISSION EAST
7500 MISSION ROAD
PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KS 66208

DECEMBER 19, 2022
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LOVE WITHOUT LIMITS

Polyamorous students at East share their experiences and struggles being a part of East's polyamorous community in hopes of creating a more understanding and compassionate student body



CROSS-COUNTRY CONNECTION

See what's happening at another U.S. high school according to their newspaper's Editor-in-Chief

FIRST FLIGHT HIGH SCHOOL THE OUTER BANKS KILL DEVIL HILLS, NC

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF NIGHT HAWK NEWS What current events are students and staff talking about right now?



**SENIOR
EMMY BENTON**



NOV. 29 | GOOD GUYS VS. CANCER TOURNAMENT

IT WAS REALLY nice to be able to support her and support the Good Guys [vs. Cancer] tournament. There was just such a big crowd there, and the energy was so lively, and it was just a really, really great and successful event.

Good Guys Vs. Cancer is a basketball tournament fundraiser, started after First Flight varsity basketball coach Chad Williams started it to raise money in his honor and memory. Ever since, it's been a classic First Flight tradition and teams nationwide travel to compete.



LEFT First Flight students participate in the Throwdown Surf Classic. As a school on an island in the Outer Banks, surfing is a popular sport and large part of student life.
photo by | **taylor newton**

RIGHT Students compete in the fourth annual Good Guys vs. Cancer basketball tournament.
photo by | **taylor newton**



SCAN ME WEBSITE



Visit the website of First Flight's news publication, Night Hawk News

staff list

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STORIES»

Read a multimedia story package about the math teachers that are East alumni, and read a news story about new short term rental policies in Kansas City by visiting smeharbinger.net or scanning the QR code



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FRAGILE - CONTAINS AMMUNITION, MULTIPURPOSE VEHICLES, FIELD EQUIPMENT



political cartoon

cartoon by **alex sajna**

EDITORIAL POLICY

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design by **sophie lindberg**art by **nora lynn****FOR: 16 AGAINST: 0**

The members of the editorial board who agree with the viewpoint of the editorial are represented by for, and those who disagree with the viewpoint are represented by against.

THE ISSUE ISN'T **BLACK AND WHITE**

Racism in the education system should be fought at a earlier level

A **AMERICANS ARE REALIZING** that their universities slapped a Band-Aid on discrimination when affirmative action was implemented in the '60s and called it good.

What was created to favor historically disadvantaged minorities in the college application process has become a deeply flawed system that fails to make up for racial injustice in America's education system.

But affirmative action is outdated and conceals the issue of discrimination at its core. It's better than allowing universities to become clouded with white legacy students, but it also shouldn't be our permanent solution.

The Supreme Court heard two cases on Oct. 31 that challenged the race-conscious admissions policies at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina, brought to SCOTUS by the anti-affirmative action group Students for Fair Admissions.

The group argues that these universities' admission policies were unconstitutional, including racial discrimination against white and Asian students, who may get overshadowed by Black or Latino applicants in their college admissions process. Lawyers arguing against this group claim that affirmative action is essential in decaying racial inequity in the education system, according to the New York Times.

While two sides are arguing for this case, affirmative action isn't simply a two-sided issue. Yes it can make universities appear more diverse and be an act of reparations for the torment minority groups have faced on behalf of the American government, but it's not solving systemic racism from the ground up.

Groups with an extra boost in admissions will suffer if affirmative action is stripped away from them, as they will most likely become underrepresented at selective colleges,

and could be less likely to succeed in America's economic system post-college.

But America can't rip off this Band-Aid without healing its mess.

Banning affirmative action means that it needs to be immediately replaced with restitution for centuries of discrimination against people of color, funding for marginalized communities, the elimination of legacy admissions and even free college. These solutions actually tackle racial discrepancy at its core, rather than treating it like a surface-level issue, which affirmative action currently does.

Black, Latino and American Indian minorities suffer from a lack of government funding and support in their communities' public schools. Two-thirds of minority students still attend schools that are mostly minority, most of which are located in central cities that receive far less funding than neighboring, suburban schools, according to Brookings.

STUDENTS FOR FAIR ADMISSIONS

a nonprofit membership group who believe that racial classifications and preferences in college admissions are unfair, unnecessary, and unconstitutional

*info from studentsforfairadmissions.org

Take the Kansas City Public School district, where 54% of their students are Black, 27% are Hispanic, and 11% are white. In comparison, 84% of East's students are white, according to greatschools.org.

The tangible difference in these statistics is that East is significantly more privileged than these urban schools, and has a higher graduation rate amongst students. It comes down to Kansas City's history of segregation and the lack of funding or resources to actually fix it, a deeply-rooted issue that affirmative action attempts to hide.

Marginalized applicants not reaching the standards of their white competition is not an issue of college admissions counselors being

directly racist. It's an economic issue due to the historical implications of segregation and racial discrimination, as marginalized communities lack the resources — technology, laboratories, tutoring — accounting for success in higher education.

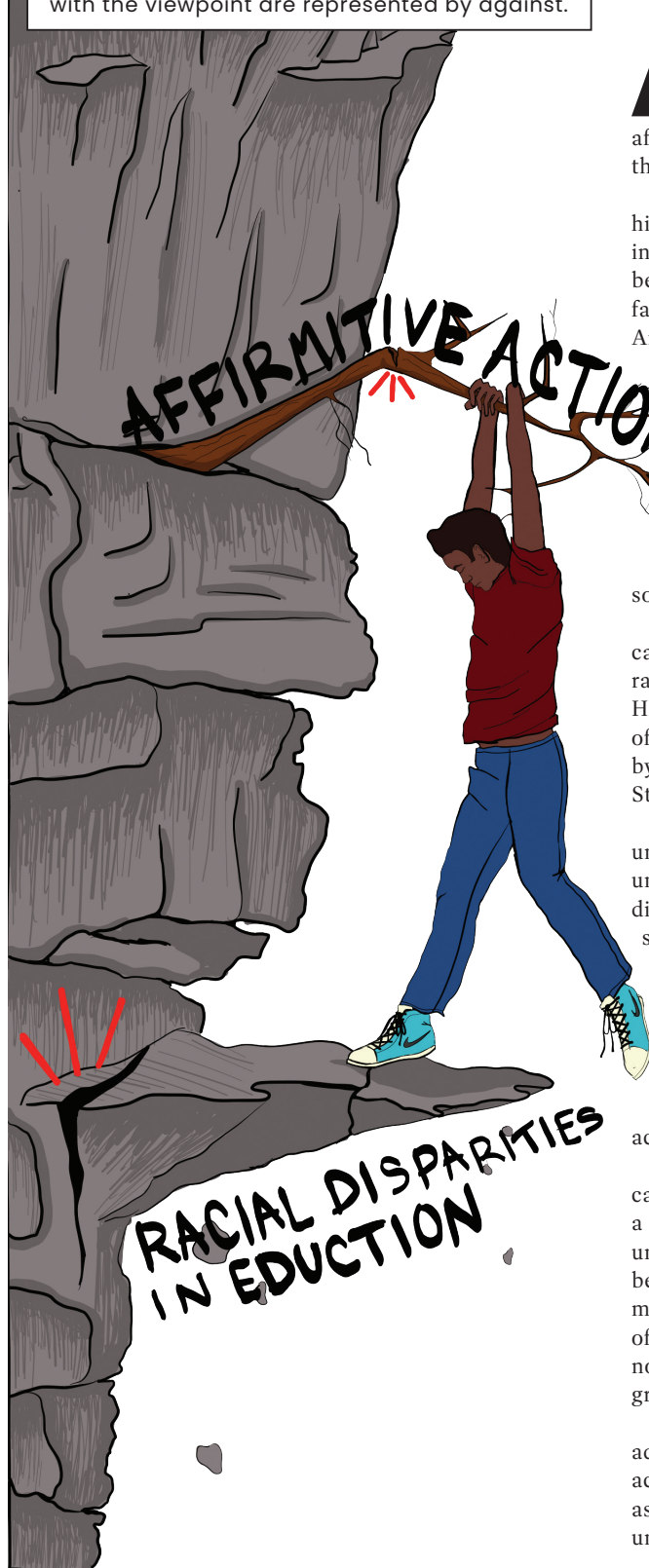
But if more resources were implemented in lower education, minority students will have the same opportunities and preparedness as their white, privileged counterparts.

The wealth gap stemming from racial disparity is a blaring issue, especially in Kansas City where Troost Ave. is practically begging us to redistribute wealth. Resources need to be implemented at the elementary level, so Black, Hispanic and American Indian students can prepare for higher education — rather than getting through the admissions process only to fall behind in school due to a lack of preparedness.

The argument that college admissions based on race is "illegal discrimination" against white students is tired. White people have never been discriminated against, so it's impossible to claim that they could be racially discriminated against in the college admissions process.

However, Asian students can be discriminated against, meaning that, according to affirmative action standards, they should receive an upper-hand. But due to Asian stereotypes that cause the wide demographic of students to be held to such a high standard of intelligence, affirmative action isn't helping them.

What affirmative action succeeds at is making prestigious universities appear to be a diverse representation of our general population. But the fact that the admissions process needs to be tampered with in order to show this diversity in higher education should be a wake up call that marginalized students and their communities are hurting.



news.

design by **avery anderson**

REDUCING THE DRIVE

Students have been asked to reduce storage on Google Drive by the district to minimize expenses

GOOGLE HAS RAISED its fees for Google Drive this month — the company's large online database to store files, photos, and more for its users. For SMSD, this means that the budget is being reconsidered, and students need to limit their online storage by Dec. 20.

Students have been storing files in Google Drive since 2015 when iPads were first introduced at the elementary school level. Students who fail to minimize their storage

by the end of this semester will lose functionality, meaning they'll lose their academic emails, in-

BARIKMO'S MESSAGE

In a Nov. 29 mass email, Assistant Principal Kristoffer Barikmo "Please reduce your files in those drives to under 5GB by the end of the semester. If you do not reduce to the student maximum of 5 GB you will lose functionality in your Google Accounts."

progress assignments and log-in information for the majority of educational websites used in school.

Sophomore Sophie Leonard feels overwhelmed by the new limitations.

"The pressure of having to choose what I keep for my college portfolio and what to throw away, on top of the risk of losing valuable work and information is really stressful," Leonard said.



TOP Various city swim teams practice at the pool over the summer.

LEFT The Prairie Village Pool's slide is not open currently either.

FINDING FUSION

Scientists have succeeded to create energy through nuclear fusion after decades of trial and error

CALIFORNIAN SCIENTISTS WITH Livermore's National Ignition Facility announced a major breakthrough in nuclear fusion on Dec. 13 that could potentially help power nations and replace fossil fuels.

Fusion is the process of combining lighter atomic nuclei to form a larger atomic nucleus. For decades, scientists have been working to produce more energy than they originally started with, releasing about 3.15 megajoules.

Lead NIF Scientist Mark Hermann started the experiment with 192 laser beams pointed at hydrogen atoms. The hydrogen's fuel lit into a fusion burn and released more energy than had been inserted. Scientists have broken even in the past, but this marks the first experiment to have ever surpassed the amount of energy put in.

With nuclear fusion, power can be drawn from a man-made source, rather than from fossil fuels. This

will assist with NATO's goals of reducing greenhouse gasses and leaving a smaller carbon footprint.

Chemistry teacher, Steven Appier, says that this discovery will change the way the next generations receive power.

"This is significant because if we are able to harness that energy, we'd be able to eliminate all of the other sources of energy that we are using currently, including fossil fuels," Appier said.

POOL PREPARATIONS

Prairie Village is continuing plans to repair the city pool

THE CITY OF Prairie Village recently decided to move forward with plans to repair the Prairie Village Pool. The repairs are estimated to cost \$1.85 million — \$650 thousand over the original budget of \$1.2 million dollars — with the primary issue being leaks in the lap pool. The completion date is still unknown.

However, the City of Prairie Village stated in their financial analysis of the "Village Vision 2.0" plan that they intended to replace the entire lap pool within 20 years of January 2021. The lap pool replacement budget is \$2.3 million. Phase six of the plan focuses on updates to the pool,

including new restrooms and concession stands, as well as a renovated lap pool. Phases 15 and 16, also relating to the PV pool, entail the addition of a lazy river.

Originally, in 2008 there were plans to renovate the 50-meter pool within 10-15 years, according to the Prairie Village Parks and Recreation Master Plan Summary.

Ultimately, there has always been the end goal of redesigning the PV pool, but never a secured date or timeline to do so according to the city's website. As of now, the city of Prairie Village plans to move forward with renovating the lap pool.



TOP The Prairie Village Pool is currently drained for the winter.

\$650,000

OVER BUDGET IN THE PRAIRIE VILLAGE POOL RENOVATIONS

design by **afa akwankaa**photo by **sabrina dean**

SALES TAX TIMELINE

How the Kansas State
Legislature's will decrease
food tax

2023

Sales tax goes
from 6.5% to
4.0%

2024

Goes to 2.0%

2025

Goes to 0%

**according to kslegislature.org*

NEIGHBORING TAXES

Nearby states sales
tax rate

MO	CO
4.23 %	2.90 %
OK	NE
4.50 %	5.50 %

**according to RocketHQ.com*



JERRY STOGSDILL
STATE
REPRESENTATIVE

IF YOU'RE MAKING \$500,000 a year, the state's portion of the sales tax of 6.5% on groceries is not a big deal. But if you're making \$17,000 a year and you have two kids, it's a huge deal.

photo courtesy of kslegislature.org



THE REDUCTION OF food sales tax HB-2106 bill will lower the food sales tax 2.5% on Jan. 1, 2023, according to the Kansas Legislature.

The HB-2106 bill was introduced on Jan. 27, 2021 by the Committee on Taxation — a committee within the State Legislature focused on taxation rates and guidelines. They proposed the bill in hopes of swift financial relief amidst rapid inflation and increased living costs.

The current food sales tax is 6.5% and it's being reduced to 4.0%. The bill states the rate will be further reduced to 2.0% the following year, and removed completely by 2025.

"Sales taxes on food are particularly regressive," State Representative Rui Xu said. "It hurts low income families, much more than it hurts high income people. But regardless of who it benefits — it helps our constituents and it's the right thing to do."

The intention of this bill is to help the working class of Kansas, as it allows the families to have a lesser burden when it comes to buying food, according to Xu.

"If you're making \$500,000 a year, the state's portion of the sales tax of 6.5% on groceries is not a big deal," State Representative Jerry Stogsdill said, "But if you're making \$17,000 a year and you have two kids, it's a huge deal."

The causation and ability to pass this bill stems from the current surplus within

the state. Kansas has the highest surplus the state has ever seen with a \$2.7 billion dollar surplus for the 2022 fiscal year and an expected \$3.1 billion surplus for the 2023 fiscal year, according to the National Association of State Budget Officers.

Despite the large surplus, the Republican representation opposed the new bill, as they were attempting to utilize the surplus in other ways.

"You always have to hedge just a little bit on the conservative side because bad things can happen." House Majority Leader and Wichita Republication Dan Hawkins said in an interview with KCUR., "We've had downturns in our economy before and we'll have them again."

As for the younger generation, they are in strong support of the bill, according to Prairie Village Teen Council Members Ainsley Pyle, and Ava Van Alstyne — they agree that the bill is necessary, and it is a great use of the aforementioned surplus.

On the local level, the Prairie Village City Council is in support of the bill as it mentions reduction of sales tax in their formal 2023 legislative platform.

"Food sales taxes are unnecessary... People need food." City Council member Ian Graves said. "When you're lower on the socioeconomic ladder, you pay more out of

your income for food, and those taxes hurt you more."

Along with the City Council, members of the Prairie Village Teen Council support the bill. They believe that the sales tax is unnecessary given the current surplus within the state according to members Pyle and Van Alstyne.

"The food sales tax from the state has been done away with but they're still local sales taxes. For example Prairie Village has 1%," Graves said. "It was a good idea for the state to allow localities to continue to have food sales taxes, it would have just blown a hole on everybody's budget, and nobody would know how to fill it."

Whether the HB-2106 bill will remain in effect long enough to fully reduce the tax is still up for debate as it will be voted upon again in the upcoming state legislative session on Jan. 9, 2023, according to the Kansas State Legislature.

The Republican legislature has the possibility to overturn the HB-2106 in the upcoming Jan. 8 legislative sessions which would keep the tax at 4.0% and halt further plans — so there is no guarantee that the bill will stay in effect, according to Stogsdill.

FOOD SALES TAXES
are unnecessary...
People need food.
When you're lower
on the socioeco-
nomic ladder, you
pay more out of
your income for
food, and those
taxes hurt you
more.

IAN GRAVES
CITY
COUNCILMEMBER



EAST'S

Students will be given the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance in seminar and for the first time since 2015 starting next semester

ALLEGIANCE

story by **katie murphy**

ADMINISTRATION PLANS TO restart Pledge of Allegiance recitation at East by the beginning of next semester prompted by a meeting between principal Jason Peres and other Shawnee Mission principals.

Students haven't said the Pledge since 2015 in bi-weekly seminar periods — despite Kansas Statute 72-9928 established in 2014 requiring public schools to provide "a daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America."

Revised from a previous statute, Kansas law has required a daily recitation program since 1923 — though according to a 1943 Supreme Court decision, students can't be forced to join in. Teacher Monique Goodeyon reports never practicing the Pledge daily in her 17 years at East.

"I don't know why we haven't been saying it, but it was just brought to my attention this year," Peres said. "Our [school] policy is that we want to adhere to the state statute that requires school districts to do the Pledge of Allegiance."

While East hasn't been participating, all other SMSD high schools except Horizons actively uphold the tradition every day according to students from South, North, Northwest and West. To prepare for the change, administration has been ordering and installing flags in classrooms since November, according to Peres. Though he stresses that students won't be forced to participate, the Pledge will be said during announcements on seminar and advisory days.

"It's important that there is an actual flag when the Pledge of Allegiance is said, so we took [it] upon ourselves to make sure that every classroom space has a flag," Peres said.

Students at North have been reciting the pledge every day for more than 18 years, according to NROTC drill commander and North senior Jalen Juan. For her, it's a way to honor veterans and celebrate being American.

"I lead the Pledge three or four times a week over the announcements," Juan said. "I'm shocked that [East students] haven't been saying the pledge for multiple years, and it's really unfortunate that students couldn't recite that."

She estimates that 30% of students participate in the Pledge regularly, mostly while sitting down. But she's proud to stand with the 10% of students that do get out of their seats.

"I'm first generation here in the United States with Filipino parents, and I do the Pledge because I'm grateful for the opportunities for my family in this country," Juan said. "That opportunity to say the Pledge should've been given to those at East these past years."

When East alum and math teacher Emily Colebank graduated in 2013, the Pledge was still not being recited. Still, she's not worried about rude talkers or teasing towards the flag while overseeing the Pledge in her seminar class.

"Some kids are going to do it, and some kids aren't," Colebank said. "I'll do it because we've been told to be a good model for students, but we can't force anybody to."

There are no consequences for refusing to say the Pledge, but disrespect or mocking during the Pledge won't be tolerated, according to Peres. Juan notes that the only impoliteness at North during the recitation

is talking in crowded classes like band and choir, but students don't seem to mind the routine overall.

Junior and Student Body President Jack Kessler is eager to say the Pledge of Allegiance for patriotic reasons, along with 27% of an Instagram poll of 181 students.

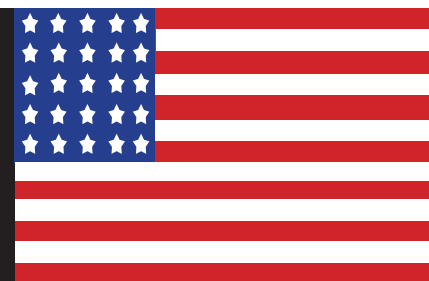
"I have a lot of veterans in my family," Kessler said. "I think it's important to say the Pledge before we start the day to honor them, especially in public school."

But junior Gabby Ribeiro is less excited to hear the Pledge and doesn't plan on participating. As an International Baccalaureate Diploma student, she has Theory of Knowledge instead of seminar and advisory — a time where IB kids can discuss their opinions on nationwide topics including freedom of religion.

"We share a lot of very strong opinions about the country as a whole, and I honestly don't think any of us [IB diploma students] would stand up," Ribeiro said. "A lot of us aren't religious or don't believe in the same God. I believe the church and state should remain separate. The Pledge doesn't reflect that when it says, 'One nation under God.'"

Kansas House of Representatives member Rui Xu notes that the statute could be revised if people bring it to their legislators' attention, but the government doesn't specifically enforce statutes like 72-9928 — it is up to school districts to enforce the policy and families to bring up issues.

"If a school district or school decided to go against that statute, it is possible that somebody could find out about it and get mad enough to sue the school," Xu said.



WE THE PEOPLE

East students and faculty give their opinions on requiring the Pledge of Allegiance



ADAM CUMLEY
TEACHER



FROM WHAT I understand, the policy is nothing new for the state of Kansas. We're just going to start following the policy here. I'm pretty neutral since I don't foresee it becoming a problem in my seminar.



LIVY NIERMANN
JUNIOR



I PROBABLY WON'T be saying the pledge when it starts being announced. But I won't be upset if people stand up and say it since it's none of my business.

SCAN ME WEBSITE



See the most recent Kansas Statute addressing the Pledge in public schools

design by **sofia blades**photo by **molly miller**

AT WHAT COST?

story by **maggie kissick**

Insulin prices have raised significantly over the years, making it difficult for type 1 diabetics to get lifesaving medicine

INSULIN PRICES HAVE risen 600% in the last 20 years, interfering with type 1 diabetics' access to the medicine they need to survive.

While insulin prices have historically been high — according to sophomore and type 1 diabetic Morgan Anderson — recent outrage on Twitter has brought these raised prices to light, after an account posing to be a popular insulin manufacturer made a false claim that insulin was now free. Though the claim was proven false, diabetics like Anderson have believed that insulin prices should be reduced.

Having access to insulin is “life or death,” according to East parent and type 1 diabetic Michael Bryant. Type 1 diabetes affects the pancreas's ability to produce insulin, so people suffering from it have to inject it subcutaneously to control blood glucose levels. Without insulin, blood sugar gets so high that it causes other problems within the body, including organ failure or death.

With the increase in price, diabetics like Bryant don't have any choice but to pay.

“I've thought about the worst case scenario before,” Bryant said. “How long can I survive without insulin? Six months to a year. And that's it. So if somebody raises the price on you, then you don't have an option but to pay it.”

Insulin prices in the United States are five to 10 times higher than other developed countries. Only three companies — Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk and Sanofi — produce insulin that is most ideal for type 1 diabetics, allowing them to control much of the market, according to Time Magazine.

A vial of insulin is estimated to cost \$6 to make, according to t1international.com, and without insurance it can cost up to \$300 for one vial — which lasts for two weeks. A new, cheaper insulin product to help combat these raised prices is set to hit the market in 2024.

While cheaper insulin options are available at stores like Walmart, this specific type of insulin isn't ideal for treating type 1 diabetes — according to East parent and

type 1 diabetic Andrea Cudney.

Cudney believes that insulin should be more affordable. In the past when she didn't have insurance, Cudney struggled to find affordable insulin prices. Because of this, she hopes there's a solution out there to reduce prices.

“I think that a solution is to look at either the length of patents [on insulin] currently and put a stop to these manufacturers from raising the costs,” Cudney said. “Or look at possibly getting the patents released so that generic insulins can be purchased for those that don't have insurance.”

Cudney is now thankful to have insurance that helps insulin costs, but even with insurance, getting access to insulin is difficult, according to Bryant.

“I felt like dealing with insurance companies was as hard as dealing with diabetes itself,” Bryant said. “It feels like your life is in the balance. How do you know that somebody actually cares if you stay alive while you're trying to get your medical supplies when you're dealing with someone you've never talked to every single time you call?”

Anderson agrees that insulin should cost less. She recognizes that insulin companies need to make a profit, but she still finds it frustrating that these companies profit off of a drug that people need to survive.

“It's really unfair to people because there's nothing you can do to prevent type 1 diabetes,” Anderson said. “Having to pay these super high prices for something that everyone else's body already produces isn't right.”

Bryant recognizes the many improvements that have been made to treat type 1 diabetes over the years, such as insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitoring devices. He hopes that new advancements, like a medicine to help reduce the number of islet cells lost, will help decrease the amount of insulin

IT'S NOT LIKE
an allergy medicine where I can just stop taking it... if you stop taking insulin, you die.

MICHAEL BRYANT
EAST PARENT

LIVING WITH TYPE 1

East students reflect on how living with diabetes has impacted their lives



JILL RICE

“I DON'T GET a choice and so the fact I have to pay for this medicine that keeps me alive and healthy is kind of ridiculous. It's just kind of dumb.”



MORGAN ANDERSON

“EVERYTHING THAT GOES into being diabetic, not even just the insulin prices, but all of the other equipment I use just costs so much. And if you don't have a good insurance company, it can get really difficult to pay for.”

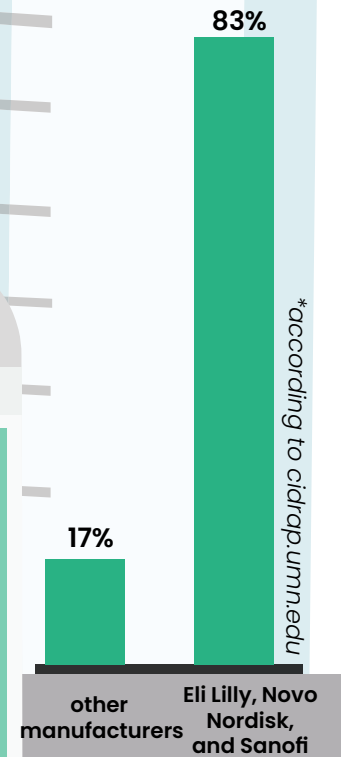
DIABETES FAST FACTS

- 96 million US adults have prediabetes
- Diabetes is the 7th leading cause of death in the U.S
- Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90% to 95% of all cases of diabetes

*according to cdc.gov

INSULIN SOLD IN LMICs

The distribution of insulin in low and middle income countries is controlled by three main companies








opinion.

design by **paige zadoo**





ALL THINGS EAST: **SHOES**

Student responses to shoe-related questions within East

WHAT SHOE IS THE **BEST** TO WEAR TO SCHOOL?

 grey_robinson17 Nike Dunks Reply >	 mallory_keal Oncloud cloud novas  Reply >	 barf_boy Doc Martins Reply >	 nora.c.hill Converse/ugg slides Reply >
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WHAT **SHOES** DO YOU SEE PEOPLE WEARING THE **MOST** AT SCHOOL?

 ashleyyykoch flip flops. Reply >	 annabellesimmons97 White Air Forces Reply >	 juliaquig uggs and nike Reply >	 grotto_gio adidas ultra boost Reply >
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2022 **DEFINING EAST** MOMENTS

Student responses to an Instagram poll asking for the "most pivotal East moment in 2022"

SHAWNEE MISSION NORTH FOOTBALL GAME



WILLOW AUSTIN
FRESHMAN

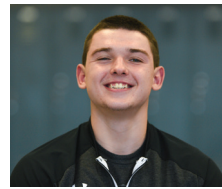


THE "NUT CUP" game against Shawnee Mission North this year. North was really hyping themselves up so it was fun to win and be at the game because of the competition aspect.

LINK CREW DANCE



BEING A FRESHMAN for me it was the Link Crew dance. It was really good for all of us to be together and with the juniors and seniors. It was fun to get introduced to it all.



BROCK RIDER
FRESHMAN

TAKE OUR POLLS

Follow the Harbinger on social media to participate in our polls



@smeharbinger



@smeharbie



@smeharbinger



@smeharbinger

WHAT IN THE **WORLD?**

Tweets on worldly topics



"OFFICIALS AT THE Department of Justice (DOJ) think it was a mistake for President Joe Biden to swap WNBA star Brittney Griner for Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout, dubbed the "Merchant of Death."

 @MIKEM75



"HEAD COACH ANDY Reid has now led the Chiefs to eight consecutive 10-win season, matching George Seifert for second-longest stretch by a head coach in NFL history. Eight straight 10-win seasons is ridiculous."

 @KCChiefs_Matt



"ONE CANNOT BOTH swear to 'uphold and defend' our Constitution and call for its 'termination.' Donald Trump continues to disqualify himself from any future consideration for the presidency."

 @SenatorDurbin

A LOOK INTO

ISSUE 7 OPINIONS

DO YOU BELIEVE IN OR PARTAKE IN AFFIRMATIONS?

*Instagram poll of 138 votes



DO YOU THINK IT'S STRESSFUL WHEN TEACHERS INTRODUCE NEW UNITS/TOPICS RIGHT BEFORE OR DURING FINALS WEEK?

*Instagram poll of 245 votes



DO YOU THINK "AMAZON ESSENTIALS" PRODUCTS ARE WORTH IT OR USEFUL?

*Instagram poll of 141 votes



JAM PPACKED

story by **larkin brundige**

Finals are an unnecessary source of stress for students and can be overwhelming, especially if they aren't give adequate time to prepare

EACH NIGHT AS the air gets colder and the sun starts to set before dinner, I feel my motivation begin to slip.

There's just one thing stopping me from cashing in my last bit of motivation for three weeks of winter break — my dreaded final exams.

The three weeks leading up to winter break are by far the most energy-sucking weeks of the school year because it feels as if a semester of work is crammed into one week, especially with additional assignments such as semester reviews, unit projects and presentations.

The first step in my getting through finals plan is to use as much of class time and any free time I have to continue to review. But we always seem to have to finish up one last unit a few days too close to the final, leaving an inadequate amount of review time in school. I review best with others and when

I have quick access to a teacher for any questions, not while sitting in my kitchen by myself.

From Nov. 28 to Dec. 20, I'm constantly alternating between pink post-it notes that I use on my MacBook for my reminders of the week. These usually consist of my nightly assignments and the two tests coming up on Friday when in reality I'm just trying to schedule my nap for the week.

The closer finals get, the more dread I feel when my teachers pile on each new assignment. Even now in the week of finals, I'm finishing assignments instead of digging through the piles of study guides I have to complete this week if I want to do well on my exams.

I understand trying to wrap up a unit the week before finals, but the extra assignments during the week of finals feels unnecessary when we will be moving on after two weeks of break. Review is crucial for finals, especially when the review is for

a grade. Now I have even more homework because of graded reviews.

I don't want to be spending hours at home on a review, rushing through it just for a grade. Again, it's about how much time I'm given in class. Without enough time, I feel helpless and will end up working alone at home which makes me feel like I'm not able to access help if needed.

I couldn't even relax over Thanksgiving break over the thought of completing a brand new unit before taking a long final. Now instead of counting down the days til Christmas, I'm counting down the days til finals.

Since then, I've received daily reminders from friends and teachers that finals are starting. The question-of-the-day in many of my classes has been, "What's your hardest final?"

Finals are exhausting — School. Homework. Sleep. Repeat. It's a consistent loop but instead of an ordinary day of

school, I'm always reviewing one subject or another.

For me, taking a one hundred question test is not my ideal way of proving what I've learned. For some people, it works out well. I prefer projects or even writing, as long as I'm not cramming my mind with information.

I want to be prepared and be able to succeed, but I also realize that if I end up crying while studying that it's okay to take a break. It's a lot to sit through, sometimes too much.

I try to remind myself that when I pick up my pencil for my first final, I struggle with this because at the end of each day I check on grades. Though, I know that grades don't define who I am. The grade I get on my final doesn't define me.

These last two days of finals, buy a large coffee, sit down for an hour at a time and study what you can. Remember that your next test is not worth your tears and I'm rooting for you, good luck.

— FINALS SURVIVAL KIT *Larkin's guide to surviving finals week* —



GUM

something to chew on during tests — and mint improves concentration



STUDY PLAYLIST

helps you get in the mood to stay concentrated while studying



BLANKET

to be comfortable while you study



ICED COFFEE

to stay awake and good little sugar rush



COLORED PENS

help make study guides and notes more organized and fun

TOP Sophomore Maggie Condon putting affirmations on a mirror while sophomore Isabel Baldassaro watches.
photo by | **audrey condon**

DO WORDS HAVE WEIGHT?



Staffers debate the usefulness and validity of affirmations

AFFIRMING AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations are a way to boost a person's confidence and something everyone should try



story by **maggie condon**

MY 6:30 A.M. to-do list: pick out an outfit, eat breakfast, brush teeth and say my affirmations.

"I am loved. I am worthy. And most importantly, today will be a good day."

As a firm believer of "fake it until you make it," I attribute most of my self-confidence to saying affirmations regularly. Having the mindset that you're beautiful — even if you don't always feel that way — will lead you to believe it. And your added confidence will elevate the beauty you already have.

When I'm about to go into a test I say, "I won't fail." I remind myself of all of the studying I did and overall why I should pass the test. Even though I can't predict how the test will actually go, this form of self-trickery boosts my confidence — and if I feel confident, I believe I'll succeed.

After seven hours of working my brain, I go straight to work at Summersalt Ice Cream. Ugh. Usually a nap at home is much more appealing than clocking

in to scoop ice cream for four hours, so the affirmations, "I am grateful for the money I have" and "There are no limits to what I desire" are next on the list. After considering that idea, work doesn't seem so bad — it's worth it.

My days end with lacrosse or tennis practice. No matter how many two-hour practices or games I have, the jitters never go away. So I have to affirm myself



AS A FIRM believer of "fake it until you make it," I attribute most of my self-confidence to saying affirmations regularly.

by saying the varying, "I can play in tough competitions" and "I have the skills I need to do well." And pre-game, it helps to remind myself that "I love the challenge of a game."

Some could argue that affirmations give unrealistic expectations or that simply speaking results in the desired income, but the reality is that they give a constant reminder that I can do hard things, I can wake up each day and make it a good one and I can practice positive self-talk to achieve immediate confidence.

ARTIFICIAL VALIDATION

Affirmations feed unsupported beliefs that can lead to harsh feeling of disappointment in yourself



story by **isabel baldassaro**

ONCE YOU TELL yourself you can do it, you will."

I'm tired of hearing teachers and parents telling me that same message since kindergarten. There are just some things that I simply can't do, even if I repeatedly try to speak them into existence with positivity.

No matter how hard I've tried, affirmations don't work for me.

If anything, they almost cause me more stress. Telling myself I can do something, only getting my hopes up to not be able to makes me feel unworthy. When I was little, I often used to tell myself before sports games that I could get at least one point for my team.

My shots would inevitably bounce away from the net, sending me home without any points scored and even worse disappointment than I would've had without breaking a false promise to myself.

Affirmations — or tricking your mind into believing something that's not necessarily true — are essentially false promises. What you believe inside or say doesn't affect

your outside environment over your actual actions and practices.

I've had friends go into a job interview telling themselves that they'll get it, only to receive no response, leaving them in a hopeless state.



NO MATTER HOW hard I've tried, affirmations just don't work for me. If anything, they almost cause me more stress.

Some see affirmations as a push to do better, but when you tell someone, "You can do it!" it doesn't necessarily mean they will. Maybe you predicted that you could pass a test, but was that a reflection of your affirmation or more of the hours you spent studying? Let's be realistic.

As I've gotten older, I've realized I feel so much better after actually getting work done rather than wasting time telling myself, "I can do it" and risking failure. I'd rather go into a basketball game with no intentions of scoring and make the buzzer shot than expect to make 20 baskets by the end.

I understand how some people may think affirmations are a positive reminder to help any situation, but overall they feed unsupported beliefs that can lead to harsh feelings of disappointment in yourself.

DAILY AFFIRMATIONS

Some of Maggie's favorite phrases

- ① "I won't fail"
- ② "I have the skills I need to do well"
- ③ "There are no limits to what I desire"

FALSE PROMISES

Isabel's arguments against affirmations

- ① Can make you feel worse than before
- ② Cliche
- ③ Beliefs don't effect your environment

design by **kai mcphail & kate heitmann**

USELESS

story by **kate heitmann**

“Amazon Essentials” raved about on TikTok and Instagram aren’t as necessary as they seem to be and won’t contribute to happiness

ALTERNATING BETWEEN THE pointy and flat end, I stack the pizzas into a neat pile on the plate. I fold some Saran-wrap over the plate and stick it in the fridge — already daydreaming about the leftover slices I’ll eat for lunch tomorrow.

But apparently I’ve been storing my pizza wrong all these years. Instead, what I need is a red, expandable Tupperware container in the shape of a triangle — making it easier to store.

Or at least, TikTok says so.

My feed is constantly flooded with videos of so-called “essentials.” These gadgets aren’t essential. You’ve lived your life thus far without a portable vacuum for your desk, you can survive without one.

So, this holiday season, don’t even bother putting these “essentials” in your cart. You won’t need them.

Consumers have been told to “buy, buy, buy” for decades. I can’t close Instagram without seeing at least one video about how a necklace detangler will save me hours. I didn’t need it 10 minutes ago, but now I need same-day shipping?

These products are not inherently bad or useless — sure, you might find a use for a magnetic soap holder. But if the reason why you’re typing in the three digits on the back of your credit card into Amazon is because it’ll make your life so much better, I’d put your card down.

However, it’s important to note there can be a need for these products in certain instances. Any product which increases accessibility and independence of disabled people should be recognized. For example, grocery bag carriers allow for those with limited hand dexterity to independently and more swiftly bring in groceries. These products have a use and purpose in the world, but they aren’t necessary for

everyone.

On the other hand, there are some products — like a 4 inch spear to grab pickles from the jar — that are simply useless.

There’s bliss and simplicity in living an inefficient life. I don’t need to save any time but instead I can enjoy the simple acts of daily life without the need of additional products.

I’VE NEVER FOUND the act of opening the toothpaste tube and putting some on the toothbrush difficult. These products are attempting to solve problems that don’t exist. Let them live on Amazon, not in your house.

I could install an automatic toothpaste dispenser but what would it bring to me? Not only would I have lost \$10 and 15 minutes installing it, I’d save maybe a few seconds each day and to what benefit? I’ve never found the act of opening the toothpaste tube and putting some on the toothbrush difficult. These products are attempting to solve problems that don’t exist. Let them live on Amazon, not in your house.

You don’t need anything else — and don’t let social media tell you otherwise. Next time you find an Amazon essential that actually looks kind of useful, wait two weeks before buying it and I promise you won’t want it anymore.

So this holiday season, skip the Amazon essentials and save some money. Try cooking dinner for your family one day or treating your friends to a movie. We all know those products will end up in the corner of the silverware drawer sitting unused anyways.

SCAN ME STORY



If you’re looking for ways to up your gift-giving game, here’s a how-to of how-NOT-to be the bad gift giver this holiday season — whether it’s for a teenage boy or your mother.



AVOID THE ESSENTIALS

Ways you can step away from the essential Amazon products

SHOP IN STORES:

Seeing the products in-person will make you think twice before heading to the checkout line



SHOP LOCALLY:

Locally-made items are often of higher quality, avoiding the cheap and low quality Amazon products.



GIFT EXPERIENCES:

Plan out adventures for your friends and family to follow along, creating lasting memories



MAKE USE OF OLD PRODUCTS:

Look around your house for products that function similarly to the essential you are eyeing



FUNDRAVEING

STUCO hosted the MORP dance for the first time since 2018 as a fundraising event for the Johnson County Christmas Bureau



ABOVE Juniors Laynie Manning and student body president Jack Kessler dance and sing to a song together. "I consider MORP to have been a great success," Kessler said. "People were hesitant to buy tickets to a dance that many have never heard of, but we had a good turn out and everyone that came had a good time." **photo by | clara peters**



ABOVE Freshman Andrew Bennett dances alongside classmates and friends wearing glowsticks provided by STUCO at the dance's entrance. **photo by | clara peters**



LEFT Student body vice president and junior Emma Krause laughs with junior Adam Minto while dancing. "To be honest, it was poorly planned and we tried to advertise as much as we could. Mrs. Fishman printed off 300 papers that said "MORP" the day before and we put them all around the school, and we ended up selling around 150 tickets which is pretty good for only advertising it a few days before," said Krause.

BELOW Freshman Hank Hunter, sophomore Ingrid Blacketer, and freshmen Andrew Bennett, Preston Hooker and Charlie Tompkins dance at the front of the crowd during the "Cha Cha Slide". **photo by | clara peters**



LEFT Senior Ben Bradley sings while pretending his fist is a microphone. "I wish I would've had MORP throughout high school because the idea of an informal prom is so fun and I feel like people actually stayed [at the dance] where at the other dances people come for 15 minutes and leave," Bradley said. **photo by | lili vottero**

SCAN ME PHOTO



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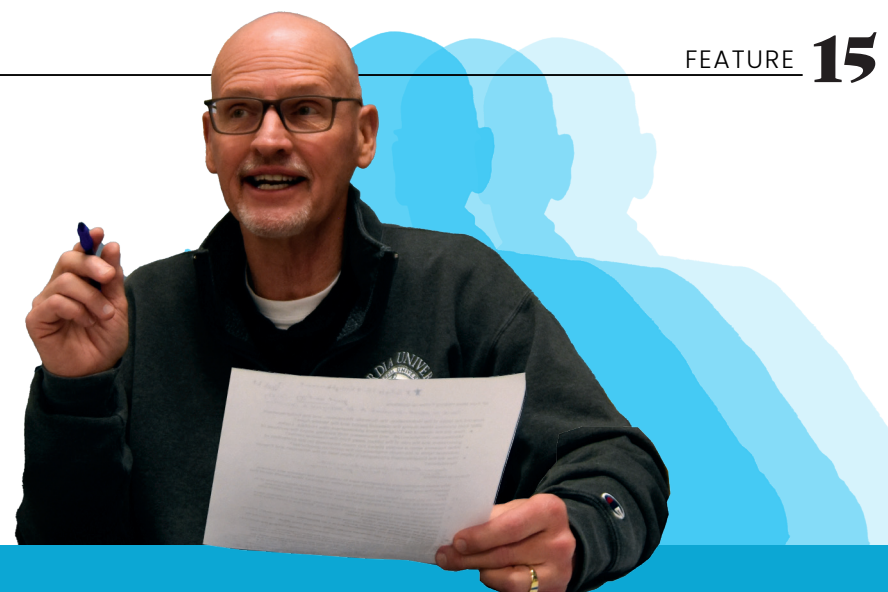
feature.

design by **addie moore**HOLIDAY
HAPPENINGSStudents share their traditions
during the holiday season**GEORGIA
MCKEE**
SENIOR**11** YEARS**GOES DUCK HUNTING**
AFTER THANKSGIVING
has killed over 15 ducks**BO
MORRISSEY**
SOPHOMORE**8** YEARS**DECORATES CAKES AS A**
TRAIN WITH COUSINS
train cars go in the order from
oldest to youngest cousin**LULU
STADLER**
SOPHOMORE**16** YEARS**SPENDS NEW YEARS**
IN THE BAHAMAS
grandparents own a house in
Lyford CayTHIS WEEK IN
PHOTOSA look at what's happening
inside the halls of East**LEFT** Sophomore Sophia Beedle completes
the chemical reaction lab in Susan Hallstrom's
fourth hour physical science class.
photo by | **lili vottero****LEFT** Freshman
Paige Bean puts
together snack
bags for a SHARE
project during
seminar. The bags
were for a holiday
movie party for
local, under-
privileged children
held by Kansas
City International
Academy. photo
by | **amelie wong****LEFT** Senior
Wyatt
Haughton
burns his
finger while
baking a
cake in his
fourth hour
foods class.
photo by | **mary gagen**WHAT'S THAT
X-MAS SONG?Staffers associate words
with Christmas songs**SCAN ME** VIDEOa holiday-
themed
song
association
game**"FARM"**
"Christmas Tree Farm"
Taylor Swift**"SANTA"**
"Santa Tell Me"
Ariana Grande**"JOY"**
"Joy to the World"
Isaac Watts
"TREE"
"Rockin Around the
Christmas Tree"
Johnny Marks**"WHITE"**
"White Christmas"
Irving Berlin

KNOWING MY RIGHTS

Substitute teacher Ken Thomas helped found the Kansas First Amendment Foundation and holds seminars to teach students about the first amendment and civic education

story by **luke beil**



A **AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND** AP European History substitute teacher Ken Thomas spent his childhood days just like every other kid — going to school, hanging out with friends, and going out occasionally. What wasn't so typical was meeting with multiple Nebraska governors before he was 18.

Being the child of Latvian immigrants who took pride in being politically active, Thomas learned the value of American rights very early.

Whether it was having political candidates coming to his house every other week during elections or watching his mother testify in front of the Lincoln City Council for Gay and Lesbian rights, Thomas was constantly surrounded by activism and human rights.

"My parents always told me that every person no matter who they are has God-given light within them, no matter what their upbringing is," Thomas said.

Thomas taught history for 28 years, and when teaching at Blue Valley Northwest in 2008, he joined the Johnson County First Amendment Foundation — an organization which informs teachers and students about the First Amendment and the Bill of Rights.

This past March, Thomas started his own foundation, calling it the Kansas First Amendment Foundation.

"I got a phone call from the superintendent of Blue Valley back in 2008, and he told me there were some attorneys looking for someone to advise them on First Amendment issues, and that's how I [got] started [with the organization]," Thomas said.

After Thomas announced his retirement from the Blue Valley school district in 2021, the previous Executive Director stepped down and Thomas was asked to become the Executive Director of the JCFAF.

In this new position, Thomas noticed that there were inefficiencies to JCFAF. Things as simple as sending in checks to be cashed took too long due to state requirements.

He recommended that JCFAF create a non-profit wing of JCFAF for educational seminars. This would become the Kansas First Amendment Foundation.

"We can pay for certain things that we couldn't before like stipends to offset costs," Thomas said. "We're kind of the operational

arm and JCFA is the funding arm."

As the foundation progresses, Thomas wants to emphasize teaching civic education.

Believing an educated citizen is someone who is willing to be productive in their community and responsible with the freedoms and rights they have, according to him.

"The majority of people can't name the rights housed in the Bill of Rights," Thomas said. "It's critical to understand not only what our rights are, but what are responsibilities are."

For Thomas, the responsibility for the educators and students of Kansas is to be informed. This means going out and voting, petitioning your government and peacefully protesting for what you believe in.

"Today too many people think 'I have my rights, but I don't have any responsibilities,'" Thomas said.

In order for the foundation to educate teachers and students, there are laws and regulations to what can be discussed and taught in the classroom, so the Foundation has partnered with members of the Kansas State Department of Education in order to

provide opportunities for teachers across the State of Kansas.

"Last year we put together a resource analysis where we read a book and came together and discussed, talking about how we can use it in our classrooms," KSDE associate Nathan McAlister said.

Since there are ever changing principles to the rule in the US, Thomas has also partnered with the Law Firm Shook, Hardy & Bacon to conduct educational programs that help teachers better understand Supreme Court decisions.

"I think where it's helped is to permit teachers to have a more fully-informed understanding of recent cases so that when they present discussion points for classes there can be dynamic discussions of the Constitution as it relates to the Bill of Rights," Lawyer of Shook, Hardy & Bacon Bill Martucci said.

Thomas believes that the vast majority of people in America are independent thinkers and that if we as a society are able to find middle ground on topics we will continue to make progress.

"There's no black and white in government, politics and law," Thomas said. "There's just different shades of gray."



THE MAJORITY OF people can't name the rights housed in the Bill of Rights...

It's critical to understand not only what our rights are, but what our responsibilities are.

KEN THOMAS
SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

SEMINAR SPECIAL GUESTS

Guest speakers that have presented at the Kansas First Amendment Foundation's seminars for students and teachers

*photos courtesy of [fedsoc.org](https://www.fedsoc.org/), [law.berkeley.edu](https://www.law.berkeley.edu/) and [jfinn.faculty.wesleyan.edu](https://www.jfinn.faculty.wesleyan.edu)

LAURENCE TRIBE



- Legal scholar and Harvard Law Professor since 1968
- Co-founder of the American Constitution Society

ERWIN CHERMERINSKY



- Dean of UC Berkeley's School of Law
- Known for his studies of the US constitution and federal civil procedues

JOHN FINN



- Professor of Government at Wesleyan College
- Author of various constitutional theory and law novels

IT'S **PREVALENT**

Statistics about polyamorous relationships

*according to
heathline

ROUGHLY
4% – 5%
OF THE POPULATION
PRACTICES POLYAMORY

POLYAMOROUS
RELATIONSHIPS LAST
8 YEARS
ON AVERAGE

2/3 OF **NON-MONOGAMOUS**
ADULTS REPORT
EXPERIENCING
SOCIAL STIGMA

The thriving polyamorous community at East wishes to use education to eliminate taboo and misconceptions

A

T WAS THIRD grade when sophomore Ash Hatstrup knew.

During an overnight school trip, Hatstrup and her two friends stayed up and sat on the floor playing board games and talking when the topic of crushes naturally came up in conversation.

“Do you like anyone?”

It was a simple question. So why was she confused? Glancing between her friends, Ash realized she had a crush on both. And she wanted to be in a relationship. With both.

poly•am•or•ous

describing romantic relationships with more than one partner at the same time, with the informed consent of all partners involved; non-monogamy

“I didn’t want to just date one of them; I wanted to date both of them,” Hatstrup said. “A bit later, I learned that that wasn’t a really weird thing.”

Later, after Hatstrup further researched polyamory — romantic relationships with multiple partners involved — and immediately identified with the label.

Despite composing roughly 1-2% of East’s student population according to an Instagram poll of 185 East students, Hatstrup and other polyamorous students believe that there is a lack of awareness of their community’s presence at school which leads to its

stigmatization and association with negative stereotypes.

“I think that most [students] don’t even know that there are people at East that are poly, but for the ones that do, [polyamory] has a negative connotation,” polyamorous student and sophomore MK Hughes said.

Polyamory is how Hatstrup, Hughes and 15 or so other self-identified East students love — and they’re proud of it.

Senior Jeanne Özkan feels fulfilled and affirmed in polyamorous relationships because it allows each person to bring in their own strengths and complement each other. During a previous relationship, she’d go out to the park and have picnics with one of her partners, then stay in for a movie night with another.

“I don’t need to find someone who fulfills everything that I need from a relationship,” Özkan said. “I just need to find people who can fulfill what they do, and then if it’s not everything, then I can find someone else who fulfills those other things.”

Polyamory is a broad term defined by the individuals that identify with it. Özkan has been in polycules — polyamorous relationships with multiple partners that can have a variety of dynamics — with several partners over the last few years. She is now happily in a “v-shaped” or “vee” triad, where her partner is dating both Özkan and another partner, whom Özkan is not dating. She

explains it as a “hinge-shaped” dynamic.

The commonality in all polyamorous relationships despite their unique dynamics is feeling comfortable in multi-partner relationships, according to both Özkan and polyamorous senior Kurt Freeman. It’s just like enjoying common interests with your partner, they say.

“It’s just kind of euphoric, seeing someone you love happy, and someone else who makes that person happy,” Freeman said. “It’s like liking the same song.”

Polyamory is on the rise in younger generations, according to YouGov polls. In a January 2020 survey of more than 1,300 U.S. adults, 56% say that their ideal relationship is completely monogamous compared to a previous 61% in September 2016. Generationally, 56% of millennials say they wouldn’t be comfortable if their partner wanted to have a polyamorous relationship, compared to 69% of Generation X and 74% of Baby Boomers who say they wouldn’t be OK with this under any circumstances. In summary, generations are becoming increasingly accepting of polyamory.

Still, polyamory remains a taboo subject with little legal protections for its community, according to Brett Chamberlin, the non-monogamous co-founder and executive director of Chicago-based polyamory rights nonprofit, OPEN.

Chamberlin says that as an openly

polyamorous person, he frequently hears stories from friends and colleagues whose family members disowned them on account of their polyamorous lifestyle. He’s seen people hide their non-monogamous relationships for years from employers and potential to avoid losing yet another job for something that doesn’t affect their work in the slightest.

“Harm and stigmatization persist,” Chamberlin said. “It causes higher rates of anxiety and depression for people and can be compounding.”

poly•cule

all the people in a network of non-monogamous relationships

As “relationship structure” is not a workplace-discrimination-protected status, it’s completely legal for employers to fire or discriminate against employees for being polyamorous, and even writing anti-polyamorous policies in workplace codes of conduct, according to Polyamory Legal Advocacy Coalition. Additionally, polyamorous people also face housing discrimination, inequitable access to health insurance and citizenship access, according to Harvard Law Today.

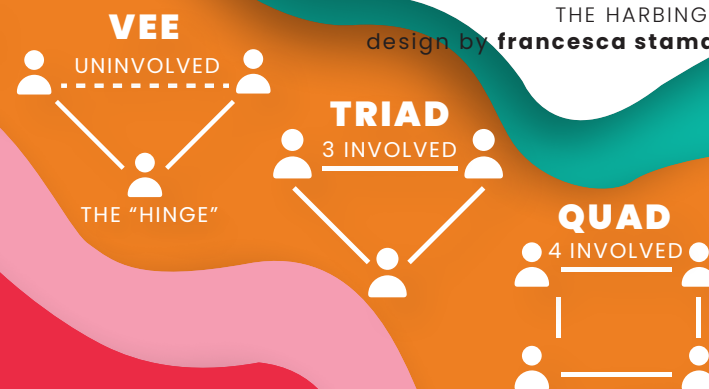
“The goal is to create a world that isn’t subject to social stigma or institutional discrimination,” Chamberlin said. We’re hoping to accomplish this by passing bills

MORE MOUR

story by **greyson imm**

POLYCULE TYPES

Common partner groupings



to protect people, and also just helping to create more media and visibility in which all relationships between consenting adults are accepted and protected.”

Though polyamorous students at East don’t deal with housing, workplace or healthcare struggles, they still are subject to anti-polyamorous rhetoric.

“Weird.” “Gross.” These are both comments polyamorous student and sophomore Mimi Suptic has heard in the hallways. Suptic is thankful that their family has been supportive since coming out, but wishes classmates wouldn’t be so quick to judge.

“A lot of people outside of the community view it as really weird, and I find a lot of people being so [quick] to judge,” Suptic said. “Last year, my friend group had a polycule. A lot of people outside of the friend group didn’t really know much about it or understand, and so there were a lot of untrue rumors spread.”

Suptic has heard classmates referring to polyamorous relationships as an “easy way to cheat on their partner.” Özkan is often reminded on social media of the untrue misconception that polyamory is just based on sex. And Hattrup recalls classmates saying that polyamorous people never get jealous. They all feel that lack of awareness and education surrounding polyamorous people drive these stereotypes.

These students want monogamous people to know that, no, polyamorous people are *not*

driven to this relationship style by a desire to cheat or sleep around, and instead polyamory is all about love — Özkan herself is asexual. And, yes, even polyamorous people get jealous — the same as any other relationship style.

Misconceptions like these discourage people from coming out, make openly polyamorous people feel uncomfortable and damage existing relationships, according to Hattrup.

“It makes people who are still figuring themselves out feel like it’s wrong,” Hattrup said. “I know two of my friends used to date and they were dating someone else and people would constantly ask, ‘Hey, are you cheating on her?’ or tell one of them ‘Your boyfriend’s cheating on you.’ Those types of comments can really hurt a relationship.”

Shifting the narrative from these false notions requires cooperation and communication between polyamorous and monogamous people, according to Kristian Einstman, founder of the 30,000-member international polyamorous rights organization PolyamProud.

Einstman said that his activism stems from the ostracization he faced from a family member after coming out as polyamorous. The organization shares polyamorous education via social media and even redesigned and voted on a new pride flag to best unite non-monogamous people.

“Misunderstandings and unkind things that

are said about non-monogamy and polyamory are rooted in this idea that others believe that it’s wrong and that it’s their job to tell you it’s wrong,” Einstman said. “But it’s not wrong. And more than that, it’s not their job, and more than that, my relationships don’t affect them in any way.”

On a societal scale, Chamberlin is combatting these problems by organizing in-person and social media-based educational campaigns. He supports grassroots leaders advancing non-discrimination legislation.

“Ultimately, we believe that in just helping people open up about [polyamory] by creating more education within the broader culture, less [people will be] exposed to stigma, discrimination and they can have greater access to community,” Chamberlin said. “The bigger picture is part of the broader push towards a world where we can kind of relate to one another a little bit.”

This mission isn’t exclusive to Chamberlin’s circles. Polyamorous East students aim to incorporate these same ideals in school by fostering honest and open conversations about polyamory and being authentic about how they love. To make East a more accepting place, Özkan has built a community of people that accept her by surrounding herself with supportive friends.

“East, for me at least, has been a really accepting community,” Özkan said. “I know

that there’s a large part that’s not, but I have stayed away from that, and I’ve made my own community of people.”

To invoke this cultural change, both she and Hattrup say that education and awareness on these issues are essential. Understanding polyamory and what students face in a monogamous-normative environment, they say, fosters mutual respect in all students of various identities.

“With anything you don’t understand, you’re geared to be judgmental towards it at first,” Hattrup said. “Understanding the entirety of [polyamory] usually changes your mind.”

Freeman asks students to research polyamory online and through social media. Ask non-invasive questions to polyamorous classmates. Build relationships in the community. This is how East can create a supportive and productive environment of monogamous and polyamorous students, he said.

“All you have to do is a quick Google search and you’ll come to find that it’s not the malicious thing that some people seem to make it out to be, and that it really is a pretty beautiful community,” Freeman said.

BACK IN BUSINESS

story by **peyton moore**

Marketing Application students share their DECA projects consisting of a paper and presentation that they'll compete in early March for DECA state

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

A rundown of the different DECA categories that these groups are competing under

INNOVATION

The idea generation and opportunity recognition needed to take advantage of market opportunities to introduce a new business, product or service

COMMUNITY GIVING

Giving uses the project management process to raise funds or collect donations to be given to a cause/charity

THE POOP CLOCK

WHAT STARTED AS an idea to keep students from wandering the halls for too long has transformed into seniors Reece Kaneda, Joe Hardinger and Ethan Boren's DECA project — the Poop Clock — an iPad that will track attendance.

Though their marketing teacher Mercedes Rassmussen insists on a new name, the boys see the Poop Clock as the most technologically advanced invention to keep track of attendance.

As mentioned in their 10-page paper, the Poop Clock will be stationed on a classroom wall by the door, for students to sign-in and out using their student ID as they enter and leave class. Their attendance at the beginning of the hour will be sent directly to the attendance center, and if students want to leave class to go to the bathroom or get a drink, they will sign out and the iPad will inform the teacher.

Students who leave the classroom have the option to click bathroom, counselor, water fountain or other.

"At first it was a clock just to see how long you go

to the bathroom," Kaneda said. "But it's now more about accountability of students who are skipping class or taking too long of breaks."

Once the Poop Clock is in schools, the boys' idea is that teachers can personalize controls on the clock — allowing for only a certain number of students out of the classroom at a time. The system will mean more instruction time for teachers as they'll no longer have to take attendance or be interrupted throughout lessons. Plus, it'll ease accountability of students for teachers and substitutes as it tracks how long students are out.

Teachers and administration will have direct access to live attendance during the school day. So in case of emergencies, each student will be accounted for without deliberation of where they went.

"If there's a threat in the building it will tell the teacher where each student is and how long they've been gone," Kaneda said.

GIFTING GIFTS

SENIOR KATE SCHIRGER never faltered on what she wanted her DECA project to be. As a member of the teen board and active volunteer for the Children's Place, she knew she wanted to do a charitable project under the Community Giving DECA category.

The Children's Place is an organization that cares for children ages one to eight years old that have been impacted by traumatic events like mental and physical abuse.

Schirger organized The Children's Place's first official Holiday Giving Shop on Dec. 7 for her project where kids shopped for the loved ones in their lives. Her goal was to teach kids that the holiday season is just as much about giving as it is receiving gifts.

Kate reached out to the top donors, frequent Children's Place volunteer and the Chiefs Vice President of Community Impact Anna Sharf, to collect

donations for the holiday shop. Alongside Chiefs gear like hats, flags and drawstring bags, the kids each received a stocking filled with toothbrushes, small gift cards, toothpaste, gloves and a hat.

"The kids got to pick out different colored blankets and hats," Kate said. "They had to make decisions based on what they thought their parents or their caregiver would like — something they may not have done before."

Kids ranging from two to seven years old ran in squealing to the shop to pick up their gifts for their caregivers.

"I love hanging out with those kids and volunteer regularly there, but I've never seen their faces light up so fast when they saw all the presents," Kate said. "Some were too little to understand that the gifts weren't exactly theirs, but they all looked like they were having a great time."



INSPIRED BY THEIR frustration for the lack of reactive solutions during school shootings, seniors Henry Stechschulte, Will Alexander and Eddie Leopold have created the first reactive solution: the metal door.

They started by asking themselves a simple question: "What are the solutions

right now?" While many schools have adapted to shootings by placing armed guards in buildings, implementing active shooter protocols and introducing metal detectors, Stechschulte explains that the problem is that those are all preventative measures. But, the group's idea for a metal door is a reactive solution — it activates when a threat actually occurs.

In their plan, each classroom will be arranged with a large box on top of the door containing three different bullet proof metal panels. As the threat enters the building, administration and the office will send a warning over the intercom that the doors will descend out of the box in 15 seconds. Teachers will then check the halls for wanderers before the doors come down.

"Every school's different, every

layout's different," Stechschulte said. "But with the metal doors we can at least guarantee safety for some people. Some may say, 'What if kids get locked out?' but we lock doors anyway and the drill is that we don't open doors after they are locked even if someone's knocking, so the metal doors would only guarantee that kids behind those doors are safe."

Every school's different, every layout's different. But with the metal doors we can at least guarantee safety for some people.

HENRY STECHSCHULTE
SENIOR

work and explaining the new drills schools must emphasize before using the door.

"Obviously this would be a change that has to do with the safety of kids so we will have very clear steps of what we will do and how schools must drill this new plan," Stechschulte said. "When it happens, hopefully most people remember the drills and keep as many people safe as possible."

photos courtesy of **francie and lora garrison**
design by **adya burdick**



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

story by **gracie takacs**

Sophomore Francie Garrison reflects on her experiences in the Dominican Republic with her family and the church

THE SCHEDULE

Francie's daily routine while in the Dominican Republic

Wake up in La Romana
to begin
the day

7:30AM

Eat breakfast at the
Casa Pastoral and
relax

8:00AM

Arrive at the Bateyes and
go to designated
station

9:30AM

Eat lunch and get on
buses to go back to
the hotel

2:00PM

Arrive back at hotel, go to
the beach, and end the day
with dinner

3:30PM

INSTEAD OF PREPPING

food in her kitchen the night before Thanksgiving this year, sophomore Francie Garrison was flying back from her

five-day mission trip in the Dominican Republic.

Francie returned home after helping impoverished villages with a new perspective and greater appreciation for her life — despite missing the pumpkin pie.

Francie has been going to the Dominican Republic on mission trips for three years with the Village Presbyterian church. The church works with Light A Candle, a non-profit organization which sponsors different bateyes.

bat•eyes

a term used to refer to a rural community of sugarcane workers in the Dominican Republic

"It definitely opens your eyes a lot more, and it makes you very thankful for what you have," Francie said. "It's just really eye opening and it teaches you to be appreciative of what's yours."

In the bateyes, Francie works at different stations helping with things like dental hygiene and taking blood pressure,

which Francie feels is a big help since so many people desperately need it. Light A Candle has hosted these volunteer events with a total of 10 mission trips being held after being founded in 2008.

"The motivation of helping others [inspired me to do this work] because my mother was really poor," founder Sandy Yan Meristal said. "She came from Haiti, then she came to live in the DR. She tried to raise kids with very little resources, I went to school and wanted to go to college, and I was actually helped with missionaries from Kansas City who helped me go to college."

Francie has connected with many people over her trips despite not speaking the same language, like Angelica, who Francie met in 2021. She was six at the time and wouldn't leave Francie's side. Instead of being able to do her job, she played with Angelica — even meeting her family after their connection.

"You make such strong connections, which is so cool because there's a language barrier — they're speaking Spanish and you're speaking English, but it doesn't matter because you're just making a physical connection," Francie said. "Not even with words."

Lora Manka Garrison is Francie's mom and the director of the International Mission at the Village Church. She

YOU MAKE SUCH strong connections which is so cool because there's a language barrier — they're speaking Spanish and you're speaking English, but it doesn't matter because you're just making a physical connection.

FRANCIE GARRISON
SOPHOMORE

loves having the experience to share with Francie and how passionate she is about mission trips.

"I think being able to grow up and watching her be so dedicated to something that has such a huge impact on people has made her even more of a role model to me," Francie said. "Being able to help her plan things for the trip and be by her side the entire time is so rewarding, it's definitely something that we have been able to bond over."

The Garrisons have been on three trips to the Dominican Republic together since Lora Manka Garrison started working at the church.

"When Francie and her brother Ash went on their first service trip with me to the DR in 2019, it was one of my most proudest moments," Lora Manka Garrison said. "They both worked so hard helping out at our health stations in these grueling conditions with it being very hot, no a/c, electricity or water."

SOMETHING'S SUPERNATURAL

Members of the East community share their experiences with supernatural beings

story by lily simmons

design by nora lynn
photos by caroline martucci
& hadley chapman



HAUNT AT THE HOTEL

Senior Kale Napier experienced the paranormal at a haunted hotel

FROM BRINGING HORROR movies to researching paranormal history, senior Kale Napier and his older brother, Quinn, have always been interested in the supernatural. Eager to possibly contact a ghost, they traveled to “the most haunted hotel in Kansas” — the Hotel Josephine. As if the 132-year-old Victorian hotel couldn’t get any creepier, the Napiers found out they would be the only guests in the hotel that night, aside from the manager.

The hotel has a long history of hauntings. The original owner named the hotel after his daughter, Josephine, and some guests say she never left, wandering the hotel and keeping any unruly guests in check. A woman was believed to have hung herself in the bathroom of a room on the second floor, and there have been instances where guests have come out of the room struggling to breathe.

Of course, the Napiers wanted nothing less than the most haunted room in the hotel,

the Buffalo Suite — where guests had heard a bell in the closet ring in the middle of the night, and even captured pictures of shadows in the mirrors.

After getting checked into their room, they started off the long night with a tour of every room in the building. As they turned a corner of the hallway, they heard loud, slamming footsteps — but as they looked back, no one was there.

“We all just heard that, right?” Kale said, asking the other two to validate his skittishness.

This was replied with a casual “yep” from the manager.

The brothers were given free roam of the hotel, and could even borrow the hotel’s ghost hunting tools such as an Electromagnetic Field reader, that shows



WE WOULD WALK into a room and start asking questions and suddenly the EMF read would start showing the temperature dropping, or the plastic ball would light up when no one was touching it.

KALE NAPIER
SENIOR

when the temperature changes in the room, and light up plastic balls that activate whenever touched.

“I do not consider myself a skeptic,” Napier said. “I think it’s real, we had some weird things happen. We would walk into a room and start asking questions and suddenly the EMF reader would start showing the temperature dropping, or the plastic ball would just light up when no one was touching it.”

According to Kale, their freakiest experience was when they were sitting in their room when the grate on the AC unit suddenly dropped onto the floor with a loud thud.

According to the manager, each room was rumored to have a different ghost haunting it. In the basement, children were heard laughing, even though there were

none. There was believed to be a grouchy old man who did not like to be disturbed in one room. In another, guests often felt a light hand grazing their back.

In that room, the brothers didn’t feel a light touch on their back, but after asking questions and trying to get a ghostly response, the brothers were shocked when they heard a table shift without anything touching it.

As if these experiences weren’t creepy enough to keep them awake at night, Napier and his brother plan on doing another ghost-hunting expedition to the gothic-style 1889 McInter villa in Atchison, Kansas. The village is infamous for frequent unexplained occurrences such as lights turning on and off in the tower, which has no electricity, scents of powdery perfume and cigarettes and figures seen in the windows.



East mothers spend their free time hunting the paranormal

GHOULISH GIRL’S NIGHT

EAST PARENTS JULIE Chapman, Emily Penke, Liz Beedle and Kelly Seibert aren’t just regular Prairie Village moms — they’re ghost-busting moms.

These four best friends travel to places like Rhode Island and Chicago, equipped with high-tech paranormal investigation tools and a desire for the familiar adrenaline rush that comes with encountering spirits. As the moms have 10 kids between them, these trips count as their girls’ nights.

But their idea of a night out doesn’t include the typical movie night and wine glasses. During their last campaign, the crew immediately felt chills down their spine as they entered the Perron home in Rhode Island, which was the inspiration for “The Conjuring” movies and Netflix’s “Haunting of Hill House.”

The colonial style farmhouse, built circa

1736, used to be a daycare, with children’s drawings still covering the dilapidated basement walls. Many depict the “Crooked Neck Lady,” a tall and skinny stick figure with a bent neck.

The Ghost Moms set up their equipment in the library with a piece of equipment called an Structured Light Sensor camera, which tracks movement using thermal sensing, similar to Just Dance technology.

“The idea is that this camera clearly maps out a human, but if it happens to map out another stick figure that you can’t see with your eye, what is it mapping?” Chapman said.

They turned the camera toward the bookshelf and it mapped out an enormously tall stick figure. As expected, the ghost

moms found it difficult to keep their cool as their heart rate and blood pressure spiked, but they tried to keep calm, not wanting to disturb the spirit in the room.



OH MY GOSH, I think that’s the tall man, — and right as Emily had said that, its neck crooked over.

JULIE CHAPMAN
EAST PARENT

“Oh my gosh, I think that’s the tall man,” — and right as Emily had said that, its neck crooked over,” Chapman said. “It was the exact same shape as the drawings from downstairs.”

Chapman placed the books back on the shelf and straightened up the place where she had set the camera, even pushing the books in to be evenly aligned. Once she had turned around, one of the books flew off the shelf and loudly slammed onto the floor.

While the crew was setting out a few light-activated balls in the basement, Beedle

jumped when a table shifted into her leg.

“She immediately jumped, and you could see where the table had actually gone into her leg,” Chapman said, “We looked on the ground, we looked to see if it was somehow on a skew or on some sort of uneven flooring and no, it one hundred percent moved into her.”

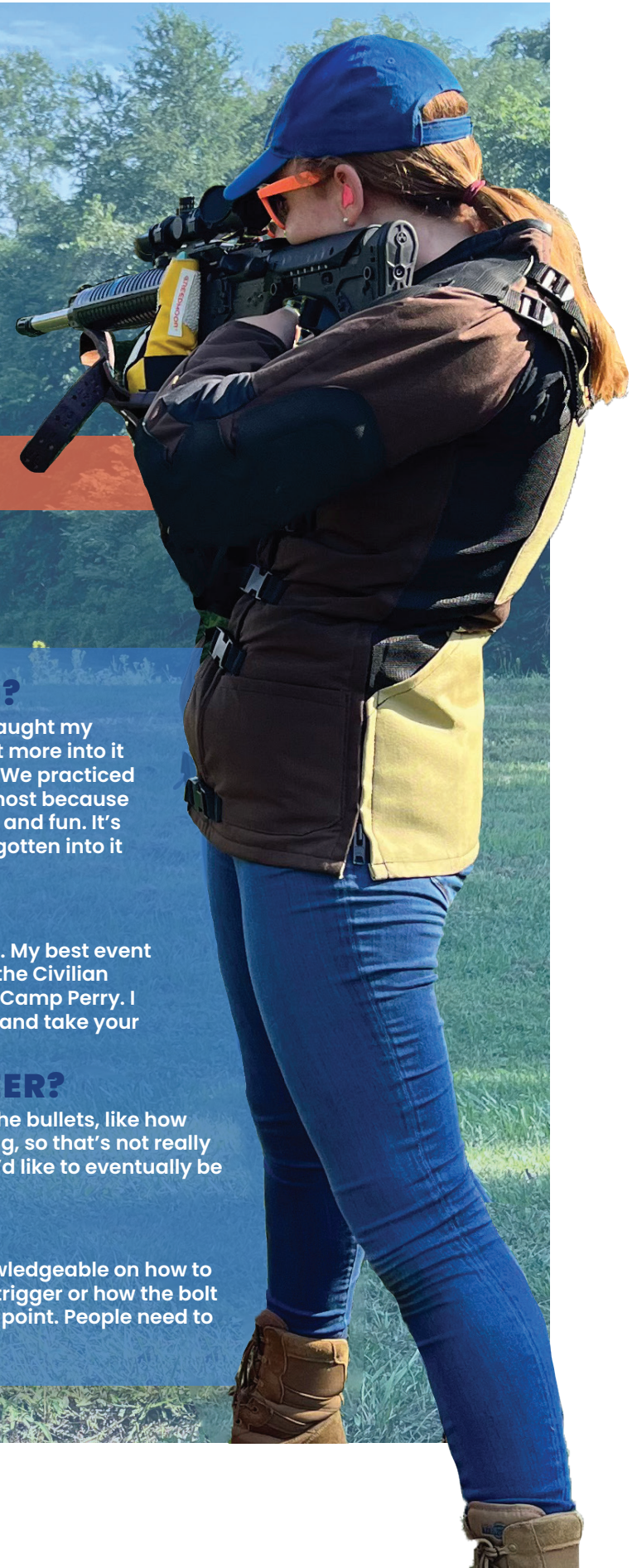
Despite these “nightmare-worthy” experiences, the ghost moms spent the night in the house with scenes from “The Conjuring” swirling in their heads.

The ghost moms crew have had dozens of other ghost encounters, like at the John Wornall House and Missouri State Penitentiary. They have been featured in People and Kansas City magazines, and they regularly post their adventures on YouTube, Instagram and TikTok.

design by **katie murphy**
photo courtesy of **emma radford**

EMMA RADFORD

Senior Emma Radford is a certified sharpshooter, practicing marksmanship with her personal AR-15 at her dad's farm in Lee Summit three times a week



HOW DID YOU GET INTO SHARPSHOOTING?

My grandpa was actually the head of the pistol team for the Army, so he taught my dad how to shoot a pistol and rifle. He got me into the sport. Last year, I got more into it and went to the Marine Corps clinic, where I got three days of full training. We practiced shooting while sitting, standing and laying down. I liked laying down the most because it feels high-powered. I'm also a left-handed shooter, which is kind of rare and fun. It's a relaxing thing that I can do to bond with my dad. My younger sister has gotten into it recently, too.

WHAT ACCOLADES YOU HAVE WON?

In the Missouri Rifle State Championship in August, I was the woman state champion of the year. My best event was the 600 yard, with 20 shots in 20 minutes down range. My sharpshooter classification from the Civilian Marksmanship program should be coming in the mail soon, which I earned over the summer at Camp Perry. I practiced my position at Mill Creek range out in Kansas. I do a lot of dry firing, where you line up and take your shot on the target, but you don't have a bullet at the time.

DO YOU PLAN TO PURSUE SHARPSHOOTING AS A CAREER?

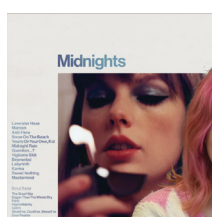
No, I want to be an aerospace engineer. It's related in a way since there's aerodynamics about the bullets, like how to counteract wind and make them faster. You have to be enlisted to join the military for shooting, so that's not really my future plan. It's more of a sport that I like to do for fun now, and I hope to continue shooting. I'd like to eventually be certified as a high master which is above marksman, sharpshooter and expert master.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON GUN CONTROL LAWS?

That's a touchy subject. It's the people who are dangerous, not the guns. People need to be knowledgeable on how to use a gun if they're going to have one. If not, they're not going to know that there's a two-stage trigger or how the bolt reacts. Safety and proper training is a huge thing. And so, yes, gun control is necessary at some point. People need to show that they're mentally safe and follow all safety protocols.

a&e.

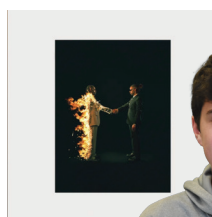
design by nora lynn

photos by **tristen porter**
& from **spotify, imdb**
& **amazon.com**WHAT IS THE **BEST ALBUM**
RELEASED THIS YEAR?*East students share what they think was the best album release this year***MIDNIGHTS**
by taylor swift**JO WILSON-HEAD**
SOPHOMORE

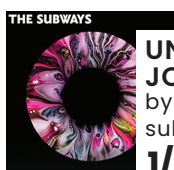
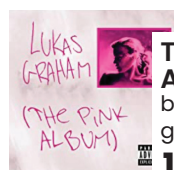
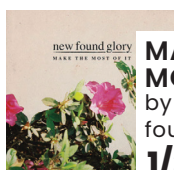
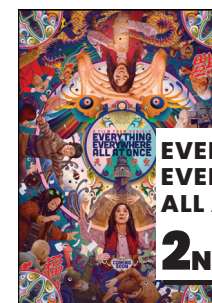
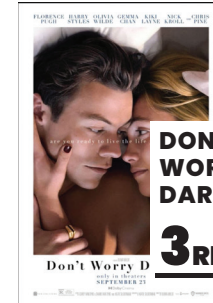
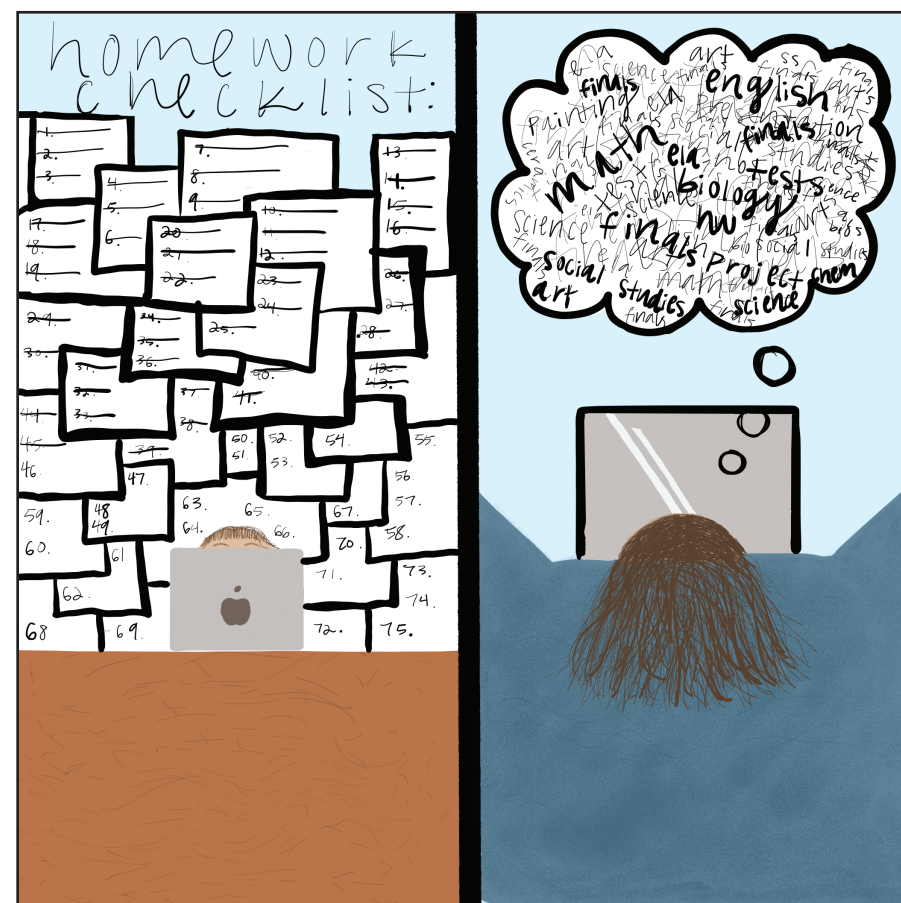
ANYTHING TAYLOR SWIFT
I'm on top of right away and Midnights is just fantastic. [I think I've listened to it] like 50 times, but straight through like 10 times. I put "Karma" on like every morning.

**GEMINI RIGHTS**
by steve lacy**SOPHIE CAMPBELL**
FRESHMAN

I THINK THIS [ALBUM] was really great. Bad Habit got really popular, but I think there's also a bunch of great other songs on there. It's one of those [albums] I put in all on my play-lists, 'cause it's really versatile.

**HEROES & VILLAINS**
by metro boomin**COOPER LEE**
JUNIOR

IT HAD A GREAT intro with "On Time," John Legend was good on the vocals. And then since it's Metro Boomin, you're gonna have a great production, and I just like the sound throughout.

THE FIRST MUSIC RELEASES OF **2023***Albums releasing in January***UNCERTAIN JOYS**
by the subways
1/13**THE PINK ALBUM**
by lucas graham
1/20**MAKE THE MOST OF IT**
by new found glory
1/20**DIAMONDS & DANCEFLOORS**
by ava max
1/27**COME GET YOUR WIFE**
by elle king
1/27**GLORIA**
by sam smith
1/20**EAST'S TOP 2022**
MOVIE RELEASES**based on a poll of 23 people**Movies that East students think are the best of this year***THE BATMAN**
1st**EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE**
2nd**DON'T WORRY DARLING**
3rd**IT'S OK TO**
TAKE A BREAKcartoon by **larkin brundige***Students should be more forgiving to themselves during finals week*

art & design by **sophie lindberg**

DOES RODRICK RULES RULE?

story by **christian gooley**

A review of the Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules movie remake

AS I OPENED the Disney+ app I was thrilled to experience elementary school nostalgia with the animated “Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules” that was released on Dec. 2.

This movie is a remake of the original 2011 “Rodrick Rules,” a live-action version based on the 2008 Jeff Kinney book. It proved to be popular, selling 72 million dollars worth of tickets and hard copies.

While Disney attempted a remake of this film, the switch from live action to cartoon characters completely destroyed any connection we got with the characters. I mean, how can you relate to someone when you can’t see their emotions or facial expressions?

I was immediately disappointed when I saw that this movie was only one hour and 16 minutes long. With it being 40 minutes shorter than the original, I had a bad feeling this movie would be a downgrade from the live-action version I have grown up loving. Still I hoped this movie would be entertaining — and I was painfully wrong.

This movie starts off exactly the same as the original — with main character and narrator Greg Heffley opening his diary that he writes in daily. He then begins to tell the story of how he came close to his older

brother, Rodrick.

The first major change — and a bad one — was the movie completely skipped over the second scene of the original movie where the Heffley family goes to the local skating rink, which gives important background on the brothers’ relationship. In the original, Rodrick forces all of his friends to go into the skating rink and surround Greg, completely embarrassing him and his best friend Rowley.

This was such an important piece that I really think should have been left in the movie because it was vital to character development. You completely miss out on getting to like or dislike certain characters, which is a key part to movie watching.

Thankfully, the movie lines up with the original storyline after that — briefly. Greg and Rodrick’s parents go away for the weekend and leave the boys at home all alone. Rodrick then decides he is going to throw the “biggest party ever” but can’t set it up alone, so he convinces Greg to help him.

But where was the scene in the original movie of Rodrick locking Greg in the basement? All of my hopes for this movie were shattered when I realized my favorite scene was omitted. The scene where Greg and Rodrick are shown bonding in the

basement is an important part of their character development. Rodrick locks Greg in the basement until he’s able to find a spare phone which he then uses to call his mom who forces Rodrick to let him out of the basement.

However, in the new movie, Greg is locked in the basement but is never let out and the movie proceeds to show zero aspect of the party besides when Greg takes photos to rat out his brother — a far less boring and uneventful scene than the original movie.

Another very large problem that I found with this story was how unbelievable the dialogue was. It continues to show the same up and down emotions from the brothers getting along to not again just in different ways making the movie super repetitive.

The movie also has what seems to be very poorly made animations. To me it looked like animations that could be easily made on a phone app by anyone, which made it super hard to watch after 15 minutes.

I’d recommend the 2011 live action version ten times out of ten before telling someone to watch Disney’s disappointing, animated attempt. It rushed and skipped way too many key parts of the story to make a solid movie.

WITH IT BEING 40 minutes shorter than the original, I had a bad feeling this movie would be a downgrade from the live-action version I have grown up loving. Still I hoped this movie would be entertaining — and I was painfully wrong.

ANIMATED OR ORIGINAL

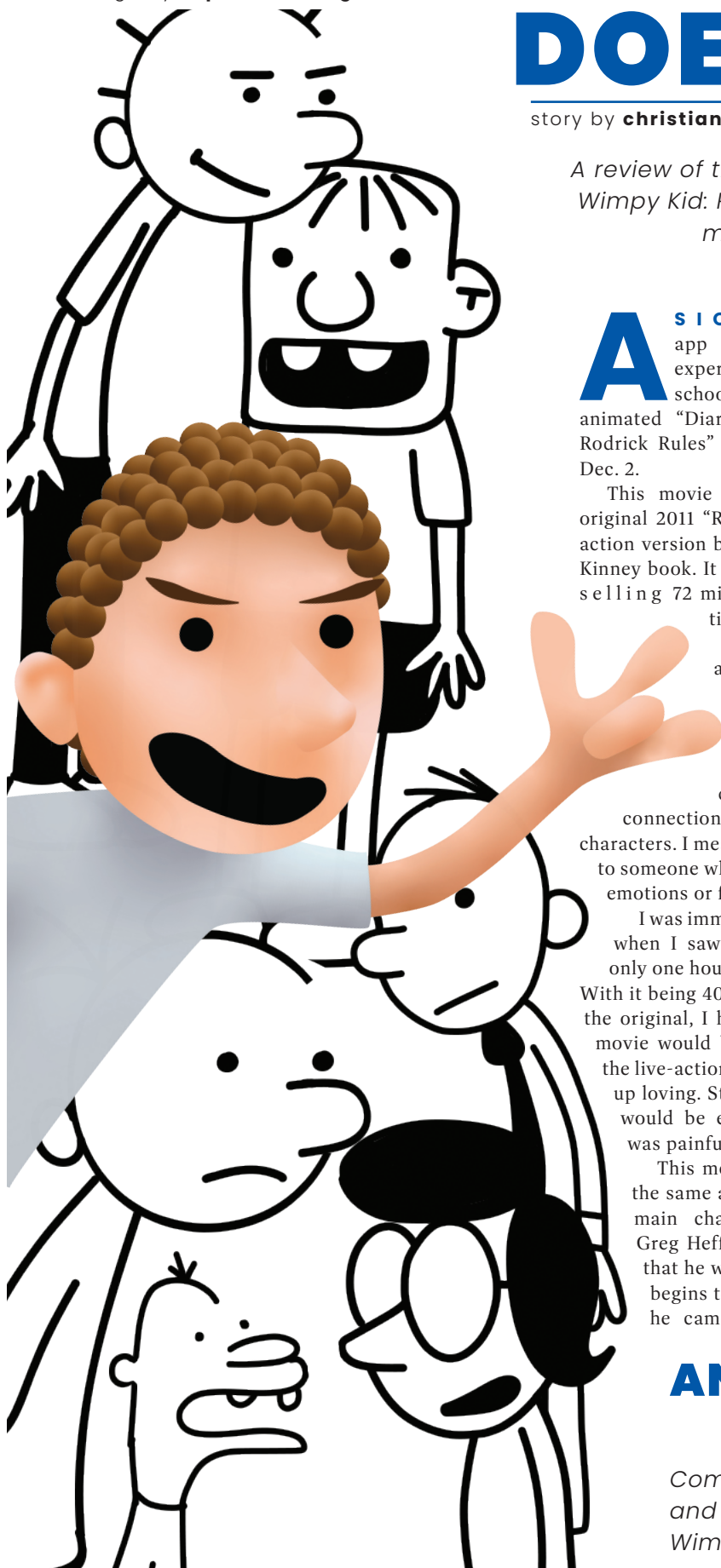
Comparing the live-action and animated Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules

ANIMATED

- 75 mins
- more lessons
- lots of scenes cut

ORIGINAL

- 100 mins
- develops relationships better



RECREATING RECIPES

A review of iconic recipes from holiday movies and television show episodes

story by **ben bradley**

AFTER COUNTLESS hours of holiday movies filled with eggnog and frosted santa cookies, 9-year-old me groaned at the sight of the CrockPot coming out for my own dinner. I didn't want the boring chicken noodle soup in my real life, I wanted to be eating what

my favorite characters Monica and Chandler in "Friends" were sharing for their Thanksgiving meal.

So this year, I decided to take action into my own hands and recreate some of the recipes that live in my mind from holiday movies and episodes.

ENGLISH TRIFLE

F • R • I • E • N • D • S

PREP TIME: 30 mins.

COOK TIME: 30 mins.

TOTAL TIME: 60 mins.



IT'S COMMON KNOWLEDGE that the best "Friends" episodes are the Thanksgiving ones — accompanied with the most memorable scene involving Rachel's English trifle when she accidentally combines two pages of a cookbook together and adds sautéed beef with peas and onions to a dessert.

After gawking over it since fifth grade, I finally attempted to recreate the disgustingly iconic recipe. The layered recipe begins with basic custards and jams, then takes a strange shift to sautéed beef, peas and onions on the fifth layer.

The trifle itself wasn't that horrible. The contrasting flavors from the cookie and custard to the raspberries made for the perfect combination of sweet and tart. It

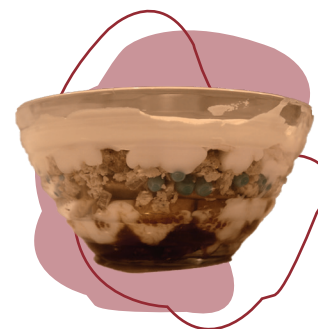
reminded me of lemon bar flavor ice cream.

My next bites revealed looks can be deceiving. I can still feel a gag in the back of my throat when I think about seeing the beef and peas swirling around in my spoon with the custard. I try to repress that memory.

At first, I wasn't even sure if I could taste it, but then I heard the crunch. As I kept chewing what started as a slightly salty flavor turned into a full on booger in my mouth. Ross was right when he called it a "foot" flavor.

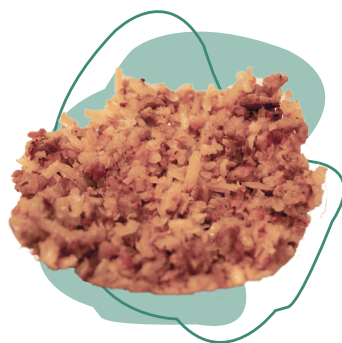
Not to toot my own horn, but if the beef was absent from the equation, it'd make a great dessert.

No amount of money could bribe me to try this again, but I plan to make the trifle minus the beef layer in the future.



WHO HASH

THE GRINCH



THE MOST UNDERGROUND item on this list is the Who Hash from "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." Growing up, I always preferred the original cartoon over the live-action movie, but I was equally intrigued by the feast of "Who Hash" in both versions.

For years I've imagined this hash to be an ice cream dessert, so when I discovered Who Hash is really just hash browns with ground meat, I was a bit disappointed.

It still sounds delicious, but the actual recipe has some flaws.

As I moved my spatula around the thick potato

concoction, I watched the heavy amount of butter and grease move to the sides of the pan. I think I discovered why everyone in Whoville has such wide cheeks — the amount of butter in their recipes.

It was hard to taste the potatoes and beef underneath the thick coating of butter. Despite the potential for the food combination, the resulting overly-salty flavor took off major points for me.

I don't know how Whos could eat this everyday — I'm sick to my stomach after one plate.

PREP TIME: 5 mins.

COOK TIME: 15 mins.

TOTAL TIME: 20 mins.



THE POLAR EXPRESS

PREP TIME: 10 mins.

COOK TIME: 30 mins.

TOTAL TIME: 40 mins.



HOT CHOCOLATE

NO WONDER THE passengers on the polar express call this chocolate "hot hot hot."

The extent of my usual hot chocolate routine is mixing the store-bought powder and hot water. This recipe called for milks, creamers and whipping cream galore. In fact, there were only one and a half cups of chocolate chips required.

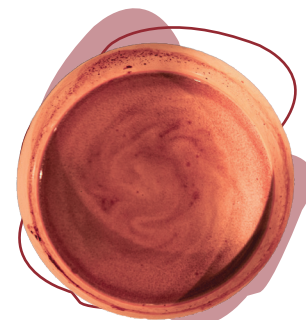
In the movie's hot cocoa serving scene, I could practically feel the piping heat and taste of smooth creaminess — and the passengers were spot on about the heat part. Maybe it was just my supernatural heating skills, but it took over 10 minutes for the drink to cool

down to a somewhat drinkable temperature.

Plus it took around five minutes to prepare the measuring cups and boil the milk — much longer than the water and chocolate mix I'm used to. But the wait was worth it for the more smooth and rich chocolate-y flavor.

It was easily some of the best hot chocolate that I've ever had and the perfect palate cleanser after the trifle.

I was instantly transported back to my days of watching "The Polar Express" on TV and having an "I want to go there" moment. It's safe to say that the next time I want hot chocolate, I'll throw the box away and head straight for this recipe.





A ROYAL REVIEW

A review of Netflix's new docu-series "Harry & Meghan" and the drama that ensued

story by **marissa liberda**

MARISSA'S TAKES

EPISODE 1



It talks a lot about their romance and how their story evolved. Harry also shares the impact of growing up with strict guidelines as a royal.

EPISODE 2



I love how it focuses a lot on Meghan and her life before dating Harry, and how she talks about the impact of the relationship becoming public and the backlash she got.

EPISODE 3



It talks about the lead up to their engagement and how it sparks both hope and skepticism. Meghan's family starts turning on her and lots of arguments are shared.

THE FIRST THREE episodes of Netflix's new show "Harry & Meghan" shocked me about what exactly the public does and doesn't know about the Royal Family and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

From the trailer, I assumed that the show would be about telling the concrete facts of the couple's life, but the episodes feel like previously seen information from magazines and social media that the public already knows — only with more drama and more footage.

After watching the documentary, I was constantly reminded of the tell-all interview that the couple had with Oprah Winfrey in 2020. During the interview, Meghan was sentimental over every topic discussed, but Harry's expression showed his readiness to move on. In the first episode, the roles are almost switched.

The show consists of stories containing FaceTimes, texts, self-recorded videos and interviews. They're each around an hour long and the next batch of episodes is out December 15. Netflix stated that all interviews and filming was done before August of 2022, before the death of Queen Elizabeth II. At that point in filming, Harry was unaware that he'd be one of the options at coronation — he didn't believe that he was an option for the king because of his siblings.

The documentary starts with their 2020 decision to leave the monarchy and

focus on being a family. Harry expressed how he "just wants to protect his family," and Meghan recorded a video telling the public that she's "scared for her life and has no words."

Seeing the couple's constant change in attitude, I began thinking — what really goes on that we don't see?

The entire show has me questioning if the royal couple knows how to present themselves. While watching, I found myself feeling like I was watching "Keeping up with the Kardashians" just with a different cast and British accent.

Netflix showed viewers just how cruel and villainous the media has been to the couple. Harry's hate for it started with his mom — it's well known that the tragic death of Princess Diana had to do with the intrusive paparazzi. Harry addressed how women of the royal family have to face the hate worse than the rest, and have more expectations to hold years of traditions on their shoulders — especially Meghan. In her case, her race was in the picture.

Meghan has a screen presence, but we can definitely see that Harry is the charming one both on and off-screen.

The point of these episodes was to show that Meghan isn't the villain she has been painted as by the residents of the UK. The nosey side of all of us feels like we need to see their lives off screen. We got a glimpse of that in the Oprah interview, but we tuned into this series to get more details — but we haven't gotten that.

THE FIRST THREE episodes of Netflix's new show "Harry & Meghan" had me shocked over what exactly the public does and doesn't know about the Royal Family and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

Although there's drama between the members of the Royal family, I can tell that Meghan and Harry's love is genuine. Harry's work with veterans is admirable, and we see it onscreen as some of the only times he's truly at peace.

Some people suspect that their ambition for their partnership with Netflix was not for a reiteration of their life story. Instead, it's a public romance with true intentions — the triumph of love over racism and the exposure of a progressive figure in which the monarchy could never hope to understand.

Part two may be tougher viewing for the royal family — but it will also deepen the sense that Harry and Meghan have become trapped in their own narrative. If they speak in their own voice about issues other than their personal experience, it will create and represent a better start.

TIMELINE OF MEGHAN AND HARRY



Prince Harry confirms he and actress Meghan Markle are dating



The Royal Palace confirms the engagement between Meghan and Harry



Meghan and Harry tie the knot at Windsor Castle in England



Buckingham Palace announced Harry and Meghan would be splitting from the family



Harry and Meghan officially move to Montecito, CA

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sports.

design by mia vogel

THIS WEEK'S WINS

Now that winter sports tryouts are over, teams are beginning to compete

SCORE: 50-60
12/9
VS. BV NORTH



BOYS BASKETBALL
SENIOR DILLON MONG

photo by macy crosser

SCORE: 8TH PLACE 101 POINTS
12/10
VS. MULTIPLE



BOYS WRESTLING TOURNAMENT
SOPHOMORE HENRY NELSON

photo by madi maupin

SCORE: 37-34
12/7
VS. BV NORTH



GIRLS JV BASKETBALL
FRESHMAN FINA KESSLER

photo by lydia coe

ONLINE PREVIEW

Catch up on East athletics on our online site

SCAN ME GALLERY



Boys Varsity Basketball Falls to Blue Valley North 50-60

SCAN ME GRAPHIC



Senior leaders give a rundown of their goals for this upcoming sports season

SCAN ME GALLERY



Boys Varsity and JV Wrestling Tournament

SCAN ME GALLERY



Girls JV Basketball Defeats Blue Valley North 37-34

BOYS OF BOWLING

This year's varsity lineup following last year's state championship





GROWTH THROUGH GRIT

Wrestling club started by an East parent brings East coaches and wrestlers together

story by **aanya bansal**

THEN-FRESHMAN GREY Robinson shrugged off his blue and white headgear and dismounted the sweat-dampened wrestling mat, fatigued from the intensity of his first state match.

He didn't know it at the time, but that match made him the first East freshman in eight years to win a match at state. He attributes his success to the head start he gained from the Indian Hills program and club wrestling since kindergarten.

Grey trained with the Kansas City Wrestling Club — a program East parent and wrestler Dan Woofter started for wrestlers from kindergarten to eighth grade in 2003. The club held practices at East and Shawnee Mission West which gave Grey early access to East wrestling by allowing him to meet his future coaches and teammates before high school.

"Knowing the guys definitely helped me because I knew how they wrestled and I knew Coach [Ufford]," Robinson said. "I had a connection there and that helped me have a relationship with some of the guys on the team."

Though the club's attendance has decreased since the pandemic, the club's coaches still hold rare, unofficial practices in their basements. Grey doesn't have time to attend anymore as he's busy with the high

school season, but he still keeps in touch with the coaches and they text him good luck before big matches.

"All the guys who I wrestled with at the club still talk and we're [all still] friends, and that family is all together still, but it's different," Grey said.

Two of the three seniors on the wrestling team Luke Clayton and Ethan Jenkinson became good friends through KCWC and the middle school wrestling program. As seniors, they feel they've put in the hours of training and conditioning needed to lead the team — whether it be watching tapes of previous matches or running a few miles after practice.

KCWC WAS JUST more mat time, more conditioning, just more reps to help you. Because if you can get all those things down, you'll be really good. The more time you spend wrestling, the better you'll get."

LUKE CLAYTON SENIOR

"KCWC was just more mat time, more conditioning, just more reps to help you," Luke said. "Because if you can get all those things down, you'll be really good. The more time you spend wrestling, the better you'll get."

And since they aren't affiliated with a specific high school's requirements, KCWC can prepare the wrestlers for more intense matches by taking them to large scale tournaments outside of the district.

Coaches also simulate full tournaments with live matches where two wrestlers attempt to win the match by pinning the other down — mimicking the style of wrestling in

a tournament. The extra tournament-style practices trained wrestlers for high school competition.

"The scheduling options are wide open," East assistant coach, KCWC coach and 2002 East graduate Erik Woofter said. "You can wrestle on a Saturday and a Sunday. You can seek out as much competition as you want, wherever and whenever."

With organized practices and tournaments for young wrestlers, coaches are able to follow students through their high school seasons.

"It just makes [the relationship] stronger," Erik said. "It's the continuity factor, and I think there's benefits of long term coaches being around for both sides. The student and the coach both know what to expect to have a good relationship."

In 2019, the club earned a banner for being one of the top 50 wrestling clubs in the country because it had over 100 wrestlers. The banner, a representation of the club's connection to East, now hangs in the wrestling room as a reminder of the number of students KCWC once had.

KCWC hopes to return to the club it was before the pandemic by gaining more coaches and students through yard signs and word of mouth.

"It's not dead," Erik said. "There's a need for it, and I think we just need to find someone that could step in and help coach and get it going back up again."

TOP Sophomore Grey Robinson and senior Ethan Jenkinson fight for control at the start of their match in practice.

what was
KCWC?

FOUNDED BY EAST PARENT
DAN WOOFER

FOUNDED IN **2003** HAD ABOUT
100 MEMBERS



USA
WRESTLING
TOP 50 CLUB
2018

design & copy by **anna mitchell**
photos by **ella ralston**

WONDERS OF THE WORLD CUP

The viewership at East and worldwide, Qatar's background and how the USA team did for the 2023 World Cup

WORLDWIDE WATCHERS

Facts about the viewers and makeup of the competition



TICKETS RANGED FROM
\$11 TO \$1607

CONSISTS OF
32 COUNTRIES
WITH A STADIUM CAPACITY OF
3 MILLION FANS

24 MATCHES IN THE FIRST SEVEN DAYS AVERAGED
2.57 MILLION VIEWERS PER DAY

VIEWERSHIP IS PREDICTED TO BE
FIVE BILLION WORLDWIDE

**according to nbc sports.com*



USA'S RUN

The scores of USA's games and star player, Christian Pulisic

GROUP B

- ⚽ 1-1 WALES
- ⚽ 0-0 ENGLAND
- ⚽ 1-0 IRAN

KNOCKOUT STAGE

- ⚽ 1-3 LOSS TO NETHERLANDS
- ⚽ GUARANTEED A SPOT IN 2026

**according to nbc sports.com*



⚽ YOUNGEST CAPTAIN

⚽ NICKNAMED "CAPTAIN AMERICA"

⚽ PLAYED OVER 50 MATCHES WITH 20+ GOALS

QATAR CONTROVERSEY

FIFA and Qatar have been criticized for corruption and human rights abuse

AL KHOR

IN ORDER TO **BUILD THE STADIUMS** USED THIS YEAR, QATAR USED ITS MASSIVE POPULATION OF **MIGRANT WORKERS**

HOMOSEXUALITY IS CRIMINALIZED AS MEN FACE UP TO **NINE YEARS IN PRISON** & PEOPLE IN THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY ARE SUBJECTED TO **CONVERSION THERAPY AND HARASSMENT**

12 OF THE **FIFA OFFICIALS** INVOLVED IN THE VOTING FOR QATAR HAVE BEEN BANNED OVER ALLEGATIONS OF **CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY**

**according to usanews.com*

HARBINGER'S HERITAGE

Staffers with international family backgrounds and who they're rooting for

ARGENTINA



FRANCESCA STAMATI
SENIOR

MY DAD'S SIDE is Argentinian, and some of his family live nearby. For every Argentina game in the World Cup, we have a watch party with milanesas and empanadas. For the last one, my dad brought his little Argentinian flag and put it on the TV stand.

FRANCE



TRISTAN CHABANIS
SENIOR

ICHEER FOR France because I was raised to do that. I spend three months every year living over there. Soccer is a huge sport over there. After every game, I call my dad and my grandma to talk. It's something we can really bond over since I don't see them a whole lot.

CAMEROON



AFA AKWANKA'A
SENIOR

I'VE BEEN INVOLVED in Cameroon sports forever because of my family. I didn't really want to cheer for the USA this year. I know my family in Cameroon was watching the game from there.

POWER OF THE WATCH PARTY

Students share their experiences watching games at the Power and Light District



CHARLIE DUSKE
SENIOR

IN 2014, I saw videos in the middle of games that would cut to Kansas City when we scored, and it looked super fun and I wanted to be a part of that environment. As a soccer player, the hype and anticipation is even bigger.



MALLORY KEAL
SENIOR

ME AND MY FRIENDS saw our guy friends going earlier in the week, and it looked really fun and the energy was insane, and it was just different actually being in it. It wasn't a mess getting in there, but once I was in there, it was a lot of people.



JACK LUCAS
SENIOR

WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN they had the games on at Power and Light, so we decided to go down there. The environment was like nothing else. It was really cool to see players my age competing in the World Cup, because I would love to be there.



BRAYDEN REYNOLDS
SENIOR

THE ENVIRONMENT WAS electric. The fans were passionate, including me and the boys. We were the most passionate there, I'd say. It's way better to watch it there with fans than being at home and getting to be with your friends.

HOOVER'S HEADED OUT

story by **addie moore**

INSTEAD OF SPENDING his afternoon yelling at lineman as they deadlift 250 lbs, ex-head football coach Justin Hoover went to pick up his two daughters from elementary school — family always came first.

After spending eight years balancing a full-time job running Spin It — a quarterback training academy — with coaching high school football and dedicated family time, Hoover decided to resign from his head coaching position on Dec. 2, hoping that it will be filled by someone who has more time to dedicate to the team's success.

"A lot of the things I had away from Shawnee Mission East were taking time away from being the best head coach that I could be," Hoover said. "I felt like I was being pulled in too many directions."

According to Athletic Director Ryan Johnson, being a head coach requires a lot of time on and off the field. Hoover spent 20 hours a week behind a desk working on plays and checking on players grades, attendance and mental health. He worked over 40 hours a week — with seven-hour game days every

Friday and an additional 15 hours of practice in the days leading up to games.



FOR [THE EAST] program to move forward and have the most success possible, it needs to be someone who can give it 365 days a year.

JUSTIN HOOVER
COACH

"For [the East] program to move forward and have the most success possible, it needs to be someone who can give it 365 days a year," Hoover said.

Hoover and Johnson both agree that the best-fit for the job is someone who is constantly in the building, seeing and interacting with players all day long. As a Rule 10 coach, Hoover wasn't consistently in the building and available to work with players.

Hoover prides himself in the relationships he develops with players — going out of his way to get to know each player. He wanted to inspire players to be the best people they can be on and off the field as his coaches once did.

rule 10 coach

A coach who is just employed to coach, doesn't teach in the building

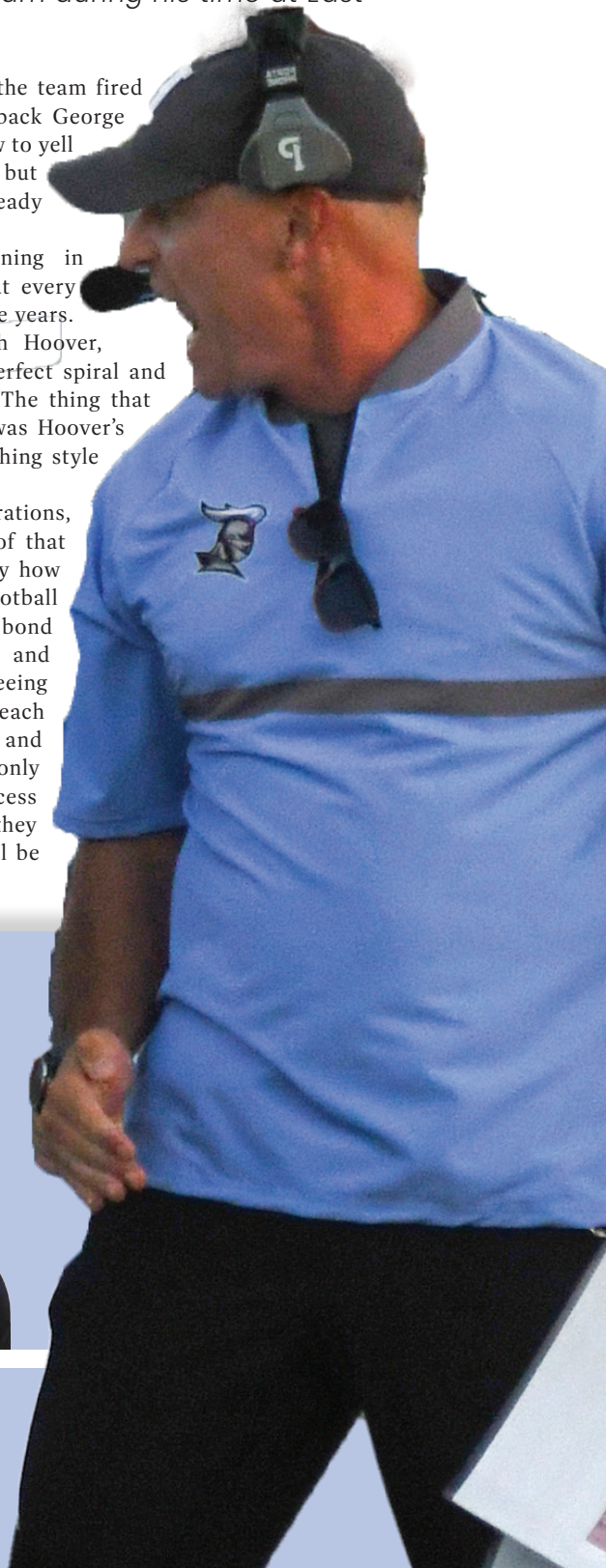
He uses the locker room as a safe-space for players with inspirational messages and hype-up speeches before games.

Coach Justin Hoover resigned from his coaching position to focus more on his family and business, having made an impact on the players and team during his time at East

"He could really get the team fired up," senior and quarterback George Kopp said. "He knew how to yell at us. Not in a mad way but just to get us going and ready for the game."

Kopp was out training in the blaring summer heat every Sunday morning for three years. He worked closely with Hoover, learning to throw the perfect spiral and how to read a defense. The thing that kept him coming back was Hoover's likable personality, coaching style and love for the sport.

"High fives, celebrations, smiles, hugs, tears: all of that makes me realize exactly how special high school football is and how special that bond is with your teammates and players," Hoover said. "Seeing these guys take care of each other on and off the field and push each other, not only will they have more success on the field, but when they leave East, I think they'll be better men."



PUTTING IN THE HOURS

A timeline of Hoover's coaching career

2006 began coaching career

2014 founded Spin-It

2018 started coaching at East

2022 resigned from East

PLAYER'S POINT OF VIEW

Junior Jake Miller gives insight on Hoover's teachings and relationship with the team



HOOVER REALLY WAS a leader. He cared about all of his players and he taught the entire team how to become good leaders if that was the route you were taking as a player. He taught me and many teammates the right way to play football even if that didn't come with success on the field. He's molded a lot of the players into good genuine people including me, and I consider him a good friend because of that.



JAKE MILLER
JUNIOR

design by **macy crosser**

CAROL OF THE BAND

RIGHT Prairie Village Teen Council member and senior Abigail Swanson helps run the line of families and children waiting to sit on Santa's lap. "My favorite part was definitely seeing how excited all the kids were to see Santa," Swanson said. "You kind of forget about how exciting that was when you were a kid." **photo by |** *claire goettsch*

BELOW Junior Gary Super, sophomore Willa Cosgrove and senior Isabelle Schmitz play the bass drums as they march down the street after the Christmas tree is lit. **photo by |** *liv madden*



Drumline members perform at the annual mayor's tree lighting in Corinth Square, followed by a festive winter jazz band concert

SCAN ME GALLERY

Use this QR code view the gallery with audio clips of the winter jazz band concert

LEFT Dressed in a Santa hat and Christmas sweater, junior Davis Muther plays a Christmas song on trombone during the Blue Knights performance, which is the highest jazz band. **photo by |** *mason sajna*



ABOVE A child approaches the lancer mascot to take a photo after the mayor lights the Christmas tree in Corinth Square. The Christmas tree lighting was affiliated with the Prairie Village Foundation. **photo by |** *liv madden*

ABOVE Sophomore Madi Moormann laughs with fellow band members sophomore Addisen O'Roark and freshman Nash Ohlund as they pass a Santa hat down the line. For the winter concert, the jazz bands performed Christmas and Hanukkah songs. **photo by |** *emily pollock*

SCHOOL DAY SLANG!

As words of the year release, revealing how people define their collective experience of 2022, here are a few of East's popular slang terms that represent our year

RIZZ

"HIS RIZZ NEEDS to be studied at Harvard."

The amount of times comments like these appear below TikToks of attractive men is unreal. A slang word that recently skyrocketed to popularity on TikTok, "rizz" captures that special quality that makes heartthrobs swoon-worthy in just four letters — and quickly infiltrated our halls.

Whether it's someone's smooth body language, confident eye contact or sly grin, rizz has become the choice word to describe the unspoken qualities that make us all

blush.

Rizz doesn't translate to attractiveness — it encapsulates someone's ability to charm, which is separate from their looks. Example: Billy Hargrove on *Stranger Things*. While Steve Harrington has the same chestnut hair and dreamy eyes, he's not the one filling my For You page with TikTok edits of him seducing older women.

No, it's Billy's tousled locks, chewing gum and sideways smile that makes him so attractive. How could you describe that in one word?

The boy's got rizz.

BAÑO

EAST ISN'T LIMITED to the English language. Though it originated before any of us were in high school as a way to celebrate school spirit, the "Baño" bathroom chant still thrives in 2022 — despite being banned.

If you feel your third-period classroom walls start to tremble, no need to crouch under the desk — that's not an earthquake, it's just about 30 sweaty high school boys crowding urinals and chanting

"bathroom" in Spanish. Soon, everyone will shuffle out in silence like it never happened. Back to third hour.

This is baño.

But you won't just see the word in texts during passing periods — at games and pep assemblies, we make sure every other school can hear one of our most coveted, East-specific terms. As silly as it is, "baño" is ours — you won't find that one on Urban Dictionary.



BRUH

EVER BEEN SO overwhelmed, annoyed or surprised that you're speechless? I've got the word for you.

The versatile phrase "bruh" encapsulates laughter, disappointment, disgust and everything in between.

"Bruh" works as a reaction for basically any situation. While the word could be confusing over text, context clues help to understand exactly what your friend means.

While nothing contains the same variety

of emotions as "bruh," similar phrases include: "oh come on," "are you kidding?" and "seriously?" But you won't get the exact message across without using the B-word.

Got a C on your Calc final? Bruh. Won the lottery? Bruh. Friend made a politically incorrect joke that you can't laugh at but have to acknowledge? Bruh.

Basically, if you don't have the brain power to come up with a creative reply, this word is a reliable fall-back that will suffice as a response to almost anything.

ROWDINESS

GAME TONIGHT. 7 p.m. Rowdiness? Mandatory.

Part of a frequent phrase used in the Pep Club GroupMe, "rowdiness" is East's favorite expression for above-and-beyond school spirit in the student section. Decking out in blue spiritwear and body paint (ignoring clothing stains), chanting louder than the home team and rushing the court after a win are all methods of flaunting our enthusiasm

at games.

And rowdiness isn't just for sports. In chant-filled pep assemblies, Lancer Day and academic events like the AP Physics 2 cardboard regatta, students from every grade show up to cheer for friends with borderline-obnoxious support. But that's what this word means — the maximum amount of passion for your school. And we have plenty of it here.