

# THE OBSERVER

VOL. 9, ISSUE 2, NOV. - JAN.



*Local family fights  
injustice in China*

*Senior Spotlight -  
Jake Schultze*

*Winter Sports  
Update.*

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ACADEMIC ALL STARS  
FEBRUARY 3, 10, 17, 24

FUN NIGHT  
FEBRUARY 7 4-6PM

VALENTINE'S DAY  
FEBRUARY 14

WINTER BREAK  
FEBRUARY 17-21

WHAT'S COMING UP

OUR STAFF

DESIGN EDITOR  
BEN DEUTSCH

COPY EDITOR  
LOGAN BROWN

ADVISOR  
MRS. SYNDER

STAFF MEMBERS  
BRITTNEY MINDER  
COLTON COOK  
EMILY CAMPBELL  
GRACE YARNAL  
ISABELLA POWELL  
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SIDNEY WILDRICK-COLE  
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We of the Alfred-Almond Observer strive to earn the trust of our readers. We have a responsibility to report an honest representation of the Alfred-Almond students, faculty, staff, and community. We hope to exceed the expectations of our readers in what a student publication should be. The staff of The Observer values this opportunity to be a dependable news source for and about our community.



# ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Here are some successful athletes and each of them had put in enough productive work before they received any recognition in return. Every month a senior athlete is awarded with "Athlete of the Month". They are awarded for their hard work and commitment they have shown over the season.



September  
Lauren Kelly for Tennis.

November  
Faith Agnello was the award recipient of this honor for Soccer.



October  
Laertes Cushing who worked extremely hard in Soccer.



# SCHOLAR OF THE MONTH▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶

Every month some students are selected from a specific department as Scholars of the month. The students are selected for their enthusiasm and strength in that specific subject area.



**To the left:** Colin Sick and Allyson Campbell were scholars of the month in September nominated by the foreign language department. **To the right:** Grace Yarnal, Isaac Little and Laertes Cushing were scholars of the month in October nominated by the instrumental music department.



**To the left:** Sidney Wildrick-Cole, Jake Schultze and Logan Whittall were scholars of the month in November nominated by the vocal music department. **To the right:** Alois Hall and Ben Deuthsch were scholars of the month in December nominated by the Visual arts department.

Stories and layouts by Paige Seneor and Grace Yarnal. Photos by Kathi Chambliss.





# SCHOOL NEWS









# STUDENTS CELEBRATE THE SEASON

Most of us have our own traditions and celebrations during the winter, but have you ever wondered how other people celebrate? Or how many different holidays there are in December? A survey given to the 7th -12th grade student body at Alfred-Almond provided information about how people celebrate.

The majority of people celebrate religious Christmas- 59% of the student body. 50% of people celebrate secular Christmas. 3% of people surveyed said that they celebrated Hanukkah. 8% of people said they celebrated the Winter Solstice and 8% said they observe the holiday of Yule. 3% said they celebrated Chinese New Year and 3% acknowledge National Short Person's Day which falls on December 22. Here is some more information about these holiday celebrations.

## HANUKKAH

Hanukkah is an eight day Jewish Festival that follows the Hebrew lunar calendar and starts in November or December. This year it is December 22-December 30. Hanukkah commemorates a miracle that happened around 200 BCE. Jews were hiding in a temple with only enough oil to keep the menorah burning for one day but it burned for eight days, thus giving the Jews more time. Hanukkah is eight days long to celebrate this miracle. During each night of Hanukkah a new candle of the menorah is lit. Many traditional Hanukkah foods are fried in oil as an allusion to the Hanukkah miracle. Potato pancakes called latkes and jam filled donuts called sufganiyot are very popular. It is a Hanukkah custom to play games with a four sided spinning top called a dreidel and exchange gifts each of the eight nights.

Every night of Hanukkah a candle on the menorah is lit until all eight candles are burning on the last night. Each night when a candle is lit special Hebrew prayers and chants are recited. In many families it is the head of the household who lights the menorah and recites the main prayers. It is also customary for some Jews to cover their hair when doing something spiritual such as lighting a menorah. Photo credit by a local Jewish Family.



Popular Hanukkah foods are matzah ball soup and potato latkes. Matzah balls are a mixture of matzah meal, eggs, water and oil that is usually served in chicken soup. Latkes, sometimes called potato pancakes are potatoes fried with flour, eggs and sometimes applesauce and flattened into the shape of pancakes. It is common to add garlic or other seasonings. Photo by a local Jewish family.



# YULE

Another winter holiday is Yule which is celebrated from December 22- January 2. Yule originates from German and Scandinavian countries. It begins on December 22, the day after the solstice celebrating the days getting longer. It has origins from early pagans who celebrated the rebirth of the sun and honored the sun and agriculture gods. In modern day it is still a 12 day festival starting the day after the solstice. Candles are a common decoration; it is also a custom to have a fire every night of Yule. There is a big emphasis on respecting nature. Nature walks and bringing wreaths and trees inside and decorating them are done during Yule. Originally families would prepare for the spring farming season during Yule; modern day families aren't preparing for the upcoming farm season but the respect for nature is still a Yule tradition. Many families exchange gifts each night; traditionally the gifts are homemade instead of store bought. It is a common custom to have feasts with food like meats, winter vegetables and fruits. Yule is a holiday that celebrates gratitude because many families are thankful that spring is coming. The holiday also celebrates family and unity, and the whole family spends the holiday together. Modern day traditions also include eating a yule log for dessert, which is chocolate sponge cake in the shape of a log.

The Schulze family celebrated Yule with traditional foods: sun king soup and wassail. Sun King soup is made with vegetable broth, orange juice, onions, tomatoes, rosemary and other spices. Wassail is a form of hot cider. These Yule foods are made of natural ingredients because the holiday has an emphasis on nature and the harvest. The Shultzes made the sun king soup together to honor their tradition of cooking meals as a family during Yule. Photo by Jake Schultze.



# RELIGIOUS VS SECULAR CHRISTMAS



Religious Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ and traditions usually include nativity scenes and going to church. On the other hand, secular Christmas has no religious or spiritual basis. Secular Christmas is more commercialized and focuses on Santa Claus, gift exchange and Christmas tree lights and decorations.

A manger scene or nativity set is a common Christmas decoration. Nativity sets have figurines for the different people in the Christmas story. The figurines come in all different shapes and sizes but porcelain is a common material. Nativity sets have religious significance because they are a depiction of Jesus Christ's birth in a manger, they typically include the three Wise men, Mary, Joseph and barn animals visiting and admiring Jesus after his birth. Photo by Shannon Heinig.

There are so many different Christmas family traditions. Many families get matching pajamas on Christmas Eve to wake up wearing on Christmas morning. The Heinig family has their own special tradition. Every year on Christmas day the whole family including grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles have a party. These parties consist of a theme, games, snacks, presents and a big Christmas dinner. In past years, the Heinig family party involved dressing up as elves, Santa or other Christmas characters. This year the party had no costumes but the theme was Carnival. There were many Christmas carnival themed games such as pin-the-nose on Rudolph. There was even a snow-cone machine to go with the carnival theme. Photo by Shannon Heinig.





# THE WINTER SOLSTICE



Sunset on the winter Solstice. The winter Solstice is the shortest and darkest day of the year. Some place have as little as one hour of daylight on the winter solstice. Photo by Stephen Little.

December 21 is the shortest and darkest day of the year. The Winter Solstice is celebrated on December 21 because this date is the turning point of the year and the days are about to start getting longer. Wiccan traditions observe the Winter Solstice because it is the longest night of the year and they believe that is when dark magic is strongest. More commonly certain cultures celebrate the Winter Solstice as the turning point of winter and the traditions are similar to Yule. Many Native American cultures celebrated the winter solstice with rituals and dances to honor the spirits so they would bless the community with a good crop season. Many of the tribes would stay up all night to greet the morning sun. In modern day people usually just gather with their friends and family for festivals and feasts on the winter solstice. Story and layouts by Grace Yarnal.

# A NEW DAY TO SLEEP IN

*Alfred-Almond residents enjoyed their first snow day last December, but what did students and teachers alike do with their newfound freedom?*



On December 2, homes like this one in Wellsville got almost a foot of snow overnight. Residents such as this one used their free day off to prepare their homes for the holiday season.

Everyone loves a snow day. You wake up to the sound of the phone ringing; you don't bother to get up as the answering machine proclaims your dearest and most heartfelt desire with glorious purpose. As time seems to pause and the superintendent identifies themselves, you breathe a sigh of relief and embrace a feeling of felicity and relaxation, safe in the knowledge that you, despite all your preparations the night before, are not obligated to go to school and are free to spend your morning getting a healthy amount of sleep in your warm, soft bed. Our first opportunity to enjoy this phenomenon came on December 2nd, the first day after Thanksgiving Break. We got almost a foot of snow overnight, much to our delight, but what do we do with our newfound freedom? What do people do with unexpected free time?

Almost everyone told tales of

shoveling, snow blowing, and all the fun that winter brings us. Meanwhile, the poor souls in Almond told stories of bathtub filling, snow melting, and warming with blankets, for all of Almond had lost power that day for varying amounts of time. In areas with power, recountings of video games, movie marathons, homework, and other such activities seemed to be the majority.

"I had work," said Ben Deutsch, "[before that] I did nothing." Chris Francis said "I love snow days. They give me a chance to sleep in and live my life." That line seems to be at the heart of the entire school, including the teachers. "Teachers love snow days even more than students do," said Mrs. Jami Snyder.

It seems that the blessing of a snow day is not lost on anyone, especially when it's a first. Foreign ex-

change student Najamee Kamah saw snow for the first time and said it made her feel "happy and excited." She's also never had a day off of school for weather before which must have been a very happy surprise indeed.

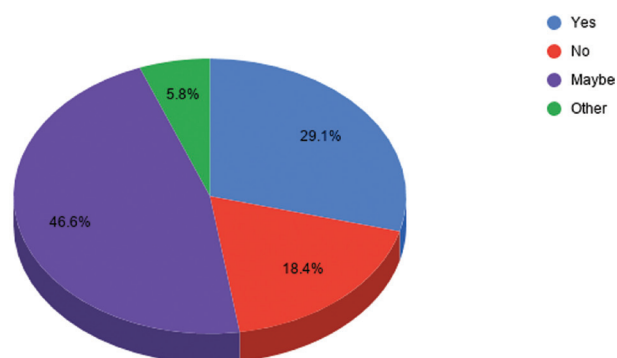
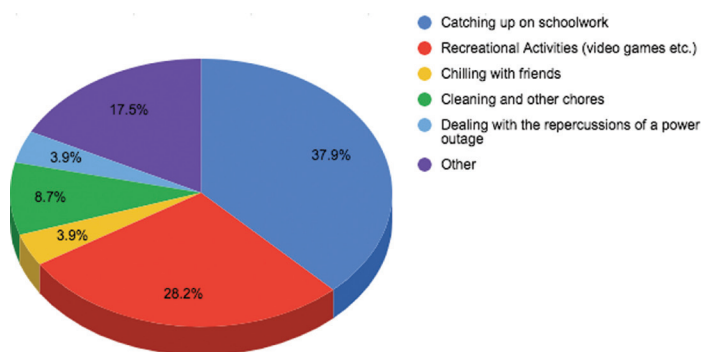
Snow days are a delightful treat but we must remember we have them for a reason. While we sleep in, the town is busy working overtime to plow, salt, and sand the roads to get them serviceable as soon as possible. While we listen for the call to sleep in, NYSEG employees wake up to an early phone call telling them to get to work fast in order to depower and fix downed electrical lines. Snow days are nice but we shouldn't take them for granted, and as we cuddle up for a nice day of nothing, try not to forget those who are out there in the cold so you can be inside and warm.

Story and Layout by Sidney Wildrick-Cole

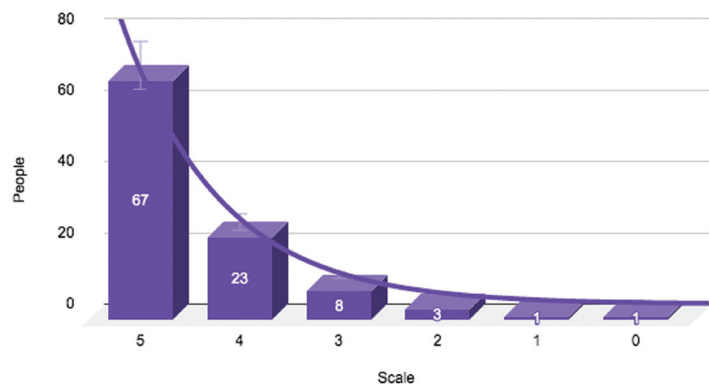




Alfred Stations residents like Riley Winters rushed to their windows on December 2nd to take pictures like this one of the first major snowfall of the year. While winter technically begins on December 21st (called the Winter Solstice) snowfalls such as this one are usually the first to signal the beginning of the holiday season.



#### How effective are Snow Days at reducing your stress?





# Alfred Almond Blood Drive

On Monday, December 9th the National Honor Society hosted the 13th annual Alfred-Almond Central School Blood Drive for the American Red Cross. The NHS set a goal to receive 27 units of blood donation. The NHS not only accomplished their goal, but exceeded expectations ending the day with 30 units.

After the blood drive was over Mr. McAneney explained the history of the annual Blood Drive: "We started in 2006. After Hurricane Katrina, students wanted to donate their blood to help out. I took some of them to the local church but they weren't allowed to give blood because they didn't have a

set appointment. That's when we worked it out with the Red Cross to set up a drive at the school." He gave this advice to all future donors: "Stay hydrated the day before and the day of EAT!! And just remember you're doing this to save lives."

To donate blood you must be in good health, weigh at least 120 pounds and be 17 years or older, (with a parent's permission you can donate at 16). It takes roughly 8-10 minutes to donate a pint, but first you must answer questions about your health and traveling history. Story by Paige Senear. Layout by Laertes Cushing.







Before the students went on the Thanksgiving Break the cafeteria staff and teachers served a wonderful meal for the students. The meal depicted above is courtesy of Adam Dwyer, who is one of the elementary gym teachers. Photo by Adam Dwyer.

# A THANKSGIVING LUNCH



The season of giving. November usually means time for the first snowfall, family, and the holidays. Every year, the cafeteria staff cooks up a special Thanksgiving meal for all of the students. When asked about this yearly tradition, Mrs. Audra Briglin of the cafeteria staff said, "I absolutely would like this to continue because I love serving the kids."

To help with this event many teachers volunteer their time dur-

ing lunch mods to serve the delicious Thanksgiving meal. In the words of Mrs. Turner, "Food brings people together!" For kids who don't share a meal with their family during the Thanksgiving holidays, as well as kids who do, lunch with friends can be a welcoming affair. The hard work demonstrated throughout this years Thanksgiving meal shows the care and dedication to a whole community. Thank you. Story and layout by Laertes Cushing.



# THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT



To end the concert, conductor Ms. Christina Rawady walks on stage to introduce the concert band. The concert band played a three piece selection for this year's Christmas concert. Photo by Eri Cushing

““The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear.”- Buddy The Elf

On the snowy evening of Monday, December 16, friends and family arrived in the auditorium for a festive holiday concert. It began with the jazz band, with guest drummer Laertes Cushing making his second concert appearance this year. Next was the Junior-Senior High Chorus with solos from Luna Quintana, Alex Diaz, Nial Rigas, Sarah Butts, Amber Weiner, Elizabeth Yanda, Noelle Hildreth, and Jesse Heffley. The evening finished with the concert band who played three songs including a crowd favorite, “Sleigh Ride.”

Later that week the school hosted concerts during the day for to send students off in the Christmas Spirit. Per tradition, a teacher was chosen as a guest conductor. At 9:00 AM the elementary concert began, and Mr. Martuscello, a first-year 5th grade teacher conducted. For the afternoon high school concert the guest conductor was Mrs. Bain-Lucey, who re-

tires at the end of this year. What better way to send off a person who has made such an amazing contribution to our school than an exciting time with the band? Story and layout by Laertes Cushing

**Top Right**-Singing a fun reworked classic, the Junior High chorus sings “Twelve Days Of A Regifted Christmas.” For their selection of songs, the soloists were Noelle Hildreth and Jesse Heffley.

**Second From Top**- Here's one lullaby that doesn't put us to sleep: the senior high chorus opens up with “Dorme Dorme.” Jake Schultze, Alex Diaz, Sarah Butts, Elizabeth Yanda, Amber Weiner, and Nial Rigas sang solos throughout the entire holiday selection.

**Second From Bottom**- It's cold outside, but it's fire on the stage as the Jazz Band plays four festive songs for the holiday season. Solos were played by Miles Muhleisen, Liam Harris, Jake Schultze, and Julian Petrillo.

**Bottom Right**- Anticipation of the crack of the whip has the crowd on the edge of their seats as the Senior High plays the traditional “Sleigh Ride.” Behind the scenes, the slap stick used to make the classic whip noise was broken during the concert. Photo By: Eri Cushing





# SLEIGH BELLS RING



On Walmart's doorstep, brothers and NHS members Aquila and Laertes Cushing invite people to donate to the Salvation Army for people in need. During their bellringing shift, *The Observer's* own Ben Deutsch came to donate his extra change.

Joyful caroling, warm smiles, and the welcoming sound of bells ringing greeted many people at the doorstep of Walmart on the frigid evening of December 20th, 2019. The National Honor Society partakes in the annual charity event in Hornell, New York. The bellringing funds are donated to the Salvation Army, where people in need can purchase second-hand clothes and other items at reduced prices. Mr. Matt McAneney, who is the advisor for NHS, said, "I enjoy this event in particular because I like to give back to the community and try to help out those less fortunate." Despite the cold weather, the good music and happy faces of children adding in extra change makes the experience worth it every year. Story and layout by Laertes Cushing.



As kids and families walk by, Mr. Matt McAneney greets them with a Happy Holidays! To help promote donations Mr. McAneney brought a speaker to play holiday classics. Photo by Logan Brown.





# Fantastic Scholastic

*December 2nd through the 6th, students and parents got the opportunity to purchase books and other items at the annual Scholastic Book Fair.*

The Scholastic Book Fair is an annual fundraiser for the Elementary School Improvement Team. Each class had time scheduled throughout the week to visit the book fair to purchase books. There was also time after school for families to visit the fair. The elementary library had a “giving tree” where parents could pick an ornament and purchase an item for the library. The library had 10 parents donate books. The book fair was held from Monday, December 2 to Friday, December 6. Normally there is a Story Night that goes along with the book fair; sadly, it was canceled because of the power outage on Thursday, December 5. The elementary library was able to use \$1,000 in “Scholastic Dollars” to purchase 65 new hardcover books. Story, layout and photos by Emily Campbell





# She Put a Spell On Us

*After competing for 12 rounds, Jennie Bensley won 1st place at the annual spelling bee in the auditorium on January 16.*



This year's annual Spelling Bee was held on Thursday, January 16. The Spelling Bee was available for all students in grades 1-8. The winner of the Spelling Bee will move on to the Regional Spelling Bee on March 28 in Corning, New York. Afterwards the winner of the Regional Spelling Bee will move on to the National Spelling Bee in Washington DC. This year's winner was Jennie Bensley, an 8th grader. Leon Beaudry, a 4th grader, won 2nd place and Aryanna Khodor-kovskaya, a 5th grader, won 3rd place. The event started with 15 spellers in the preliminary rounds. These rounds are non-elimination: the students over the course of the round tally up points. The top 12 spellers then continued onto the next round and they competed until there was a clear 1st and 2nd place. In March, Jennie and Leon will be moving onto the Regional Spelling Bee. Story and layout by Emily Campbell; photos by Mrs. Chambliss.





# Student Government Cares about Climate Change

"The Student Government Committee promotes sustainable use through its weekly recycling program. The committee hopes to model behaviors that inspire others to take action to protect the planet." - Ms. Kate Carretto

*Recycling is more than extending the life of our landfill. It is about making the best use of the resources we have available and preserving those resources for future generations. Alfred-Almond Student Government decreases the school's carbon footprint by the recycling program students' efforts.*







In Student Government 2020, we have done recycling throughout the entire elementary and high school. We are attempting to make the school's waste as limited as possible. Waste is a major problem in keeping our Earth a safe and clean place. Basic recycling plays a huge role in preventing the destruction of our planet. Our representatives from each grade seven through twelve go throughout the school putting all recyclable products into a waste bin to be sent out to be recycled. Representatives take time out of their day during activity mod to keep our paper bottles and cardboard from being simply thrown into the garbage. Story, layout and photos by Logan Brown and Will Tormey.

"I recycle so I can do my part to keep the enviroment clean. It is also a lot of fun."- Logan Dwyer





# Math Team Takes the



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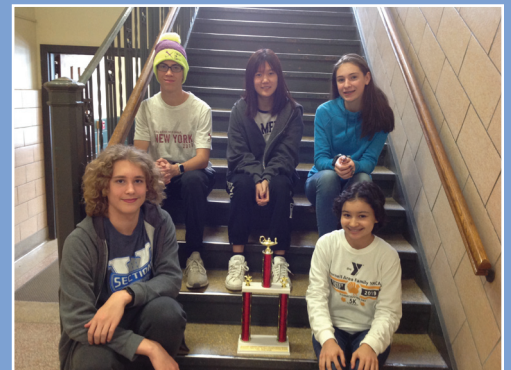
*Advisor Mrs. Bensley leads the Math Team to victory for the third year in row.*

On November 26, Mrs. Bensley gathered her Math Team and science lovers and headed to Corning Community College for STEM day. Students were able to participate in sessions that were sprinkled around campus such as automotive technology, Planetary Science, and even hands-on activities such as dissection, welding and soldering. Even though Corning offered many opportunities and activities, some Alfred Almond students were focused on one thing: the trophy.

Before adventuring to Corning, Mrs. Bensley's Mathletes took a test to compete in a math competition. The Math Team used their superpowers and squeezed every last drop out of their brain neurons in hopes of remaining on top for the third year in a row. Together, they managed to pull off a cumulative score of 113. Impressive, but was it impressive enough? As STEM day pro-

gressed, students felt their bellies flip as they awaited for the winners to be announced. When the clock finally hit 12:50, students were dismissed from their final activities and filed into the auditorium. Some couldn't help but notice the alarming amount of students who had taken the same test; would Alfred Almond take home the prize despite the evenly matched competition?

First individual prizes were announced: top scorers for Alfred Almond included Jeremiah Ford, Julian Petrillo, Shannon Heinig, Lauren Kelly, and Jina Zhao. We can thank those students for the best news to come: Alfred Almond crushed the competition. Congratulations to the Math Team for their hard work and a big thank you to Mrs. Bensley for being a wonderful and patient team leader. Story and layout by Isabella Powell.



**Top-** After a competitive standardized math test Jeremiah Ford and Julian Petrillo were Alfred Almond's top two scorers. In the small school division, Jeremiah was the top scorer.

**Bottom-** For the same competition Alfred Almond's top five scorers were Jeremiah Ford, Julian Petrillo, Shannon Heinig, Jina Zhao and Lauren Kelly. Grace Yarnal's big take away from the competition was that "the food was pretty good." Photos by Julia Bensley.





Earlier this year the math team traveled to Corning Community College for a Math Day field trip. At the end of the day participants from the Math Team received their awards for the morning competition. Photo by Julia Bensley.

In November, The Math Team celebrated their victory under the tree in the old softball field, which followed tradition of past wins. Back row, left to right: Lucian Fioretto, Micah Ford, Kevin Dunning, Lucas Koegel, Jin Wilson, Jack Byrnes, Gabe Fioretto, Sage Empson, Grace Yarnal, Isabella Powell, Sidney Wildrick-Cole, Jake Shultz, Amber Weiner, Kiara Wisniewski, Julian Petrillo, Jack Wisniewski. Front row, left to right: Mrs. Bensley, Abigail Quick, Damien Robbers, Cameron Heinig, Taylor Flaitz, Katie Claire. Trophy Holders, left to right: Lauren Kelly, Shannon Heinig. Photo by Juila Bensley.







**ALFRED ALMOND BURSTING  
WITH TALENT**





Fourteen students from the musical departments participated in this year's Area All-State, each having a unique experience. Six students traveled to Hornell High School where they would participate in the Junior High division. Katelynn Roulo and Anna Yarnal participated in the treble choir and Cameron Heinig, Julian Petrillo, Athena Cushing and Candy Zhou all participated in band section.

The senior high division was held in Corning Painted Post High School, where seven students had the opportunity to perform: Sarah Butts in the treble choir and Zoe Tarun, Amber Weiner, Jake Schultze, and Logan Whittall in the mixed choir. Isaac Little and Claire Volk participated in the band section.

Area All-State is a wonderful opportunity to meet and perform under new directors and also meet students from different schools who have the same interests. Issac Little said, "It was one of the best bands he has ever been a part of." This year David Gaines, the president of NYSSMA, made a guest appearance, which shows the close knit musical relationship across New York state.

## TALENT SHOW

# AREA ALL STATE

Parents, grandparents, family and friends shuffled into the auditorium on November 15 to witness extraordinary night full of comedy, arts and unique skills. People took their seats around six o'clock, when Shane Davidson took the stage and graciously welcomed everyone. Contestants performed their acts one by one while the judges took detailed notes. After eight amazing acts, the intermission was announced but the talent did not end there. The audience received a special guest performance by The Ukuladies, Mrs. Powers and Mrs. Snyder's original ukulele band, who sang the hit song "You're My Best Friend" by Queen.

The audience was called in after ten minutes to continue the show and seven more acts performed to place the show over the top. After all the acts, the judges went next door to tally up the scores.

After a long grilling 15 minutes the judges returned with the final result. They started with the results of the elementary category with Isabell Metz placing first for her violin performance, Kamden Winans placing second with a Queen performance, and Paxton Morris-Pierce snagged third for his speedy Rubik's Cube skills. Next, the high school category was announced with Candy Zhou grabbing first place for her violin performance, Miles Muhleisen placing second for his piano medley, and Maria Garizona taking third for singing while playing the banjo.

The night slowly wound down and people started piling out of the auditorium reminiscing about the acts and talents shown on the stage. The Class of 2023 organized a wonderful show that will be remembered for years and we can't wait to see next year. Story and layout by Logan Brown; photos by Mrs. Kirsten Calkins.







# SINGIN' IN THE RAIN AUDITIONS

*Many emotions were flying around on the day of auditions for this year's musical, Singin' in the Rain. Happy. Nervous, but excited. Confident. These were just a few of the things students said minutes before auditioning. The musical means different things for many people: some feel at home when they step out on the stage and others can feel "nervous. [Some people] have never done that before," said Will Tormey.*

Days leading up to *Singin' in the Rain* auditions a low musical hum could be heard throughout the school. Students could be heard rehearsing their songs down the hallways and in classrooms preparing for their big chance to earn a role in the play. On December 10-11, auditions for this year's musical began and the turnout was impressive. 41 students auditioned total and 15 students were on the callback list, which makes the outlook for future years promising. Auditions were held after school in the auditorium where students were found lined up ready for their turn to sign in and perform their lines. One by one students took to the fully lit stage and looked out at the empty seats. After all the auditions, the judges thanked everyone for coming out then sat down to evaluate the students.

Early on Thursday morning the callback list was posted and personal rehearsals began again, where students practiced songs for specific characters. The callbacks were held on Friday, December 13 in Ms. Karr's classroom, where students sang individually and then acted with partners and in groups.

After the acting audition, the dancing audition began, which is new this year. Since *Singin' in the Rain* requires multi-talented actors, the judges wanted to see if the auditioners could be taught and how well they could move. The cast list was posted Monday morning.  
Story, layout and photos by Logan Brown.

**Top left:** The cast list was posted early in the morning all around the school. **Top right:** Molly Tulk and Sarah Butts go to callbacks after rehearsing their lines together. **Middle left:** Ellora Enke reads lines at call backs to try and snag her wanted role. **Middle right:** Eleven students gather for call backs so the judges can make their final decisions. **Bottom:** Judges stay after the auditions stay and decide who would play the best parts.



### *Singin' In The Rain* Cast List

DON LOCKWOOD - LOGAN WHITTALL  
 KATHY SELDEN - RYANN DONLON  
 COSMO BROWN - WILL TORMEY  
 LINA LAMONT - MOLLY TULK  
 R.F. SIMPSON - CHRIS MORMINO  
 ROSCOE DEXTER - SIDNEY WILDRICK-COLE  
 DORA BAILEY - AMBER WEINAR  
 ROD - JAKE SCHULTZE  
 ZELDA ZANDERS - SARAH BUTTS  
 YOUNG DON - JESSE HEFFLEY  
 YOUNG COSMO - MICAH MCCLAIN  
 MISS DINSMORE - CLAIRE VOLK  
 MALE VOCAL COACH - GABE FIORETTO  
 TENOR WITH A GOLDEN VOICE - JAKE SCHULTZE  
 OLGA MARA - ELLORA ENKE  
 MARY MARGARET - BELLA POWELL  
 MARY MARGARET'S HUSBAND - BROGAN DONLON  
 SID PHILLIPS - NIAL RIGAS  
 SOUND ENGINEER - BROGAN DONLON  
 VILLAIN - ZACH PATTERSON  
 LADY-IN-WAITING - EMILY CAMPBELL  
 POLICEMAN - ALEX DIAZ  
 BUTLER - JUSTIN MCCLAIN  
 1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - SAM BENSLEY  
 2ND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - IZZIE WILLARD  
 3RD ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - JENNIE BENSLEY  
 WARDROBE MISTRESS - BECCA WEAVER  
 HAIRDRESSER - MORGAN TRUDELL

ENSEMBLE & DANCERS (Dancers & Characters/lines will be assigned at the first rehearsal):  
 Abigail Quick, Patty Ross, Bryana Turnbull, Danika Reese, Maddie Levey, Noelle Hildreth,  
 Ellie Drozski, Kamden Winans, Lillie Perkins, Dena Clark, Madison Coney, Tatula Worth,  
 Ammalani Ball, Erin Sanborn, Domenic Ellwood









# L.a.V.A.

## Literary and Visual Arts Magazine

L.a.V.A. is the school's first annual magazine for literary and visual arts; that's where the name comes from: Literary and Visual Arts. The magazine displays all kinds of original creative work from the current school year. This could include anything from a story you may have written to a ceramic sculpture you have made.

### Who can Submit?

Anyone can submit work, from students, to teachers, to faculty and staff, they can even be a community member. If you have work you would like to submit to possibly be entered into the magazine, please see or contact Mrs. Snyder or Mrs. Powers at **[jsnyder@aac-sapps.com](mailto:jsnyder@aac-sapps.com)** or **[apowers@aac-sapps.com](mailto:apowers@aac-sapps.com)** respectively. Send them your work, or images of your work to be reviewed and hopefully entered into the magazine.

### L.a.V.A. Club

The magazine staff is made up of students who are a part of the LaVA club. Members are involved in all parts of making the magazine, including: getting submissions, accepting content, editing copy, designing layouts and the magazine design, and promoting and advertising the magazine. Members of the club will learn how to work in InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator in the club and use it to make spreads and designs for the magazine. LaVA is also going to host the Literary Festival, and help with the Art Show. Staff members will organize and help with the events. Story and Layout by Ben Deutsch.

### ▲ Submissions in Creative Writing:

- ▶ Descriptive Sketches
- ▶ Poetry:
  - Blackout
  - Spoken Word
  - Haikus
- ▶ Short Fiction
- ▶ Dramatic Scenes (1 act play)
- ▶ Personal Essays
- ▶ Persuasive Essays
- ▶ Original songs

### ▲ Submissions in Visual Arts:

- ▶ 2-D Art:
  - Drawings
  - Paintings
  - Graphic Design
  - Photography
  - Printmakings
  - Digital Drawings
  - Collages
- ▶ 3-D Art: (submitted via image)
  - Sculpture
  - Ceramic vessels
  - Ceramic sculpture



# SA-WAD-DEE, SCHON DICH KENNEN ZU LERNEN?

*This year Alfred Almond hosted two foreign exchange students, Lea Paulic from Austria and Najamee Kamah from Thailand.*

Lea is a foreign exchange student from Austria. She has been in the United States since August 27. She has done one exchange before, she went to Florida last week for three weeks. She didn't have any particular reason to come to the United States, she had a choice between the U.S. and New Zealand and her parents wanted her to come to the U.S.

"It's not Australia. We don't have any kangaroos or oceans. It's in the middle of Europe, not the middle of nowhere." - Lea

If there is one thing Lea wants you to know about Austria it is that it isn't Australia and there aren't oceans or kangaroos.

## Differences between the United States and Austria

The landscape isn't very different but the towns are: there are a lot of shops and cafés in Austria and not a lot here. The food is healthier and there is less fast food, maybe one McDonalds in a big city. Servings are bigger in the US. There aren't gallon jugs of milk or orange juice; they are generally 1-1.5 liters. (1 Gallon = 3.8 Liters) Lea said she likes bagels and Poptarts, which they don't have in Austria.

School is very different in Austria compared to the U.S. In Austria all classes are 50 minutes long except



6th, which is 45 minutes. The time between classes is 5, 10, or 15 minutes. Students stay with their class and the teachers come to them. A normal day ends at 1:35 and two days a week they end at 3:50, but they have an extended lunch where they can leave. There aren't study halls, which she says seems boring but it isn't.

## Differences in language

Austria's official language is German. Lea doesn't think that English is difficult, because she grew up with it in Austria; they start learning it in kindergarten. She says that the hardest part is some verbs and vocabulary. She thinks that the difficulty of English depends on where you're coming from; it's harder if you come from French than it would be from German. Overall she believes English is one of the easier languages to learn; it's easier to go from German to English than German to

French, English to French or German because it's just "the" in English where German has "der, die, das, den, dem" and French has "le, la, les," which makes them harder than English.

When asked about being a foreign exchange student to the U.S. she said that leaving everything was hard but other than that it's been a good experience. Story by Riley Winters. Layout by Paige Senear. Photo by Lea Paulic.



Najamee is a foreign exchange student from Thailand; she wanted to study in the United States because she likes the freedom, culture and language. She hopes to improve her English while here. She likes the weather in New York, especially the snow because it's always hot in Thailand. Najamee plans on joining the basketball and softball teams. She says one thing Alfred-Almond has taught her is that she has to be on time.

## Differences between the United States and Thailand

In America "Students are free, don't wear uniforms, can wear makeup to school, and do their nails." In Thailand there aren't classes like chorus, ceramics, or food classes, whereas here we have various art and musical classes and clubs.

Thai food is spicy and sour and the main food is rice. In the United States Najamee says we always eat bread and there are cheeseburgers and fries. She likes Spaghetti and Macaroni.

When asked about being a foreign exchange student to the U.S. she said that it isn't difficult but it isn't easy either. "If you have perseverance and are patient I believe anything is possible." Story by Riley Winters. Layout by Paige Senear. Photo by Najamee Kamah.







Busy at work, Mrs. Preston waits in her office at her new home. She is extremely excited to be a part of Alfred Almond.



Students are Mrs. Preston's priority always. Nothing comes before the well being of the students at Alfred- Almond.

# THE NEW LEADER

*Our new superintendent is becoming a key part of our community.*

Mrs. Preston has found a home at Alfred Almond for the second time in her life. The superintendent position opened up with the leaving of Mr. Calkins. "I am profoundly excited to be a part of Alfred Almond once again. I was not expecting this position to reveal itself, but once it did I could not ignore my want to be a part of Alfred Almond once again."

Mrs. Preston previous role as the principal of the Alfred Almond elementary school gave her the chance to fall in love with this district. Mrs. Preston has a warm feeling of Alfred Almond, "It feels like I am coming home. This has always been a special place to

me. The school is the same as it was when I was the principal."

She revealed several reasons why she loves Alfred Almond the way she does. Our district may be small, but sometimes, that is exactly what a person needs. "It is an amazing feeling to be back in a K-12 environment. Everyone is close together. Alfred Almond is more than a school, it is a community."

Mrs. Preston not only loves the size of the school, but is appreciative of the support the teachers have given her return to AACS. "I am thankful for all staff here. I have only felt welcomed coming back." Story, layout and photos by Will Tormey.





Take time to get to know Mrs. Preston, not only as a superintendent, but also as a person. She may be our leader but she is also an amazing human being.



# SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Get to know

Jake Emerson Schultze

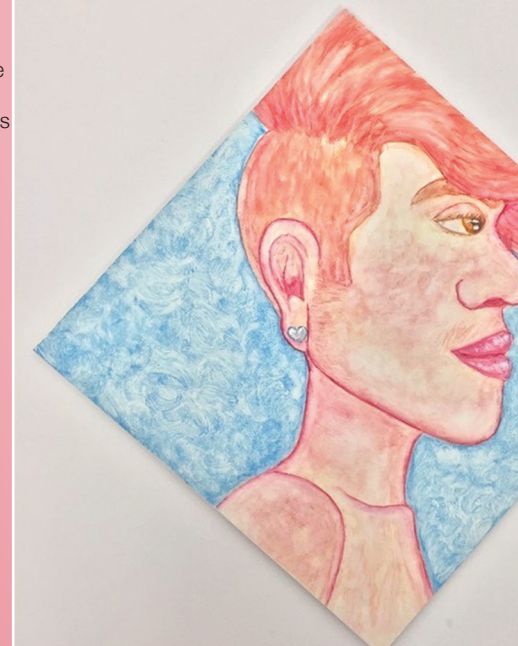
Jake Schultze, an outstanding and hardworking senior. He is very involved in school: he plays tennis and also spends a lot of time working on his astonishing art. He devotes his free time to making origami, solving Rubik's Cubes and chilling with his friends. He is the most influential person anyone could ever know: anytime he is around, he can always make a bad situation good, making people laugh with his amazing personality traits. He deserves to be in Senior Spotlight because of how trustworthy, supportive, and generous he is. He is always working so hard to put a smile on everyone's face and that definitely deserves recognition. Story and layout by Brittney Minder. Photos by Jake Schultze.

## Fun Facts from Friends

1. Cancels plans 9/10 times
2. Collects broken glass
3. Has a dog with 2 different colored eyes
4. Collects rocks
5. Is a vegan because he loves animals
6. Plays the trumpet \*badum-chahah\*
7. Has four cats and they're all orange
8. Same birthday as Ariana Grande
9. Used to be a gymnast
10. Has an instagram made specifically to sell/make art



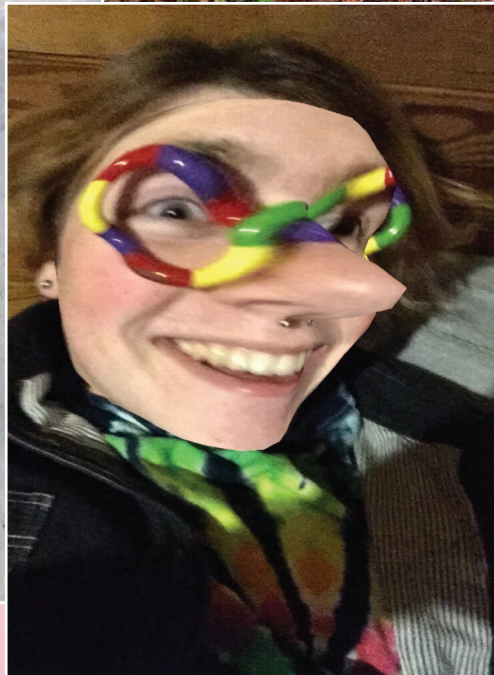
With amazing talent, Jake Schultze uses watercolor, acrylic and sharpie to complete his painting of the purple girl. He used gouache, an opaque paint similar to watercolor, to finish his piece of a guy with red hair.







For Secret Santa, Jake made a song for Sarah Butts and played the song on the ukulele as a present to her.

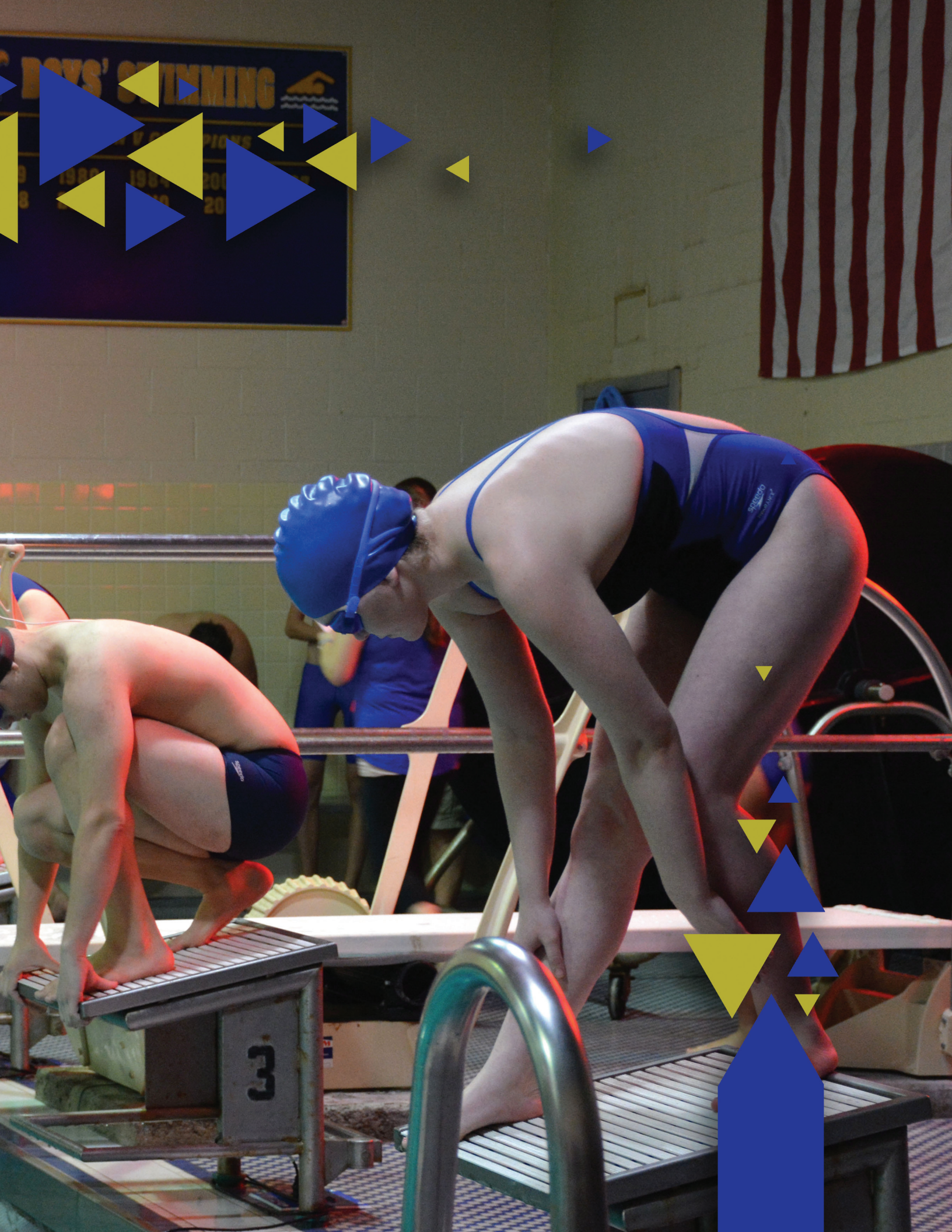




# ATHLETICS









# IT'S ALL DOWNHILL FROM HERE

*Skiing is fundamentally different than most "conventional" sports offered here. Let's take a look as to what it's like to ski in the boots of an A-A student.*

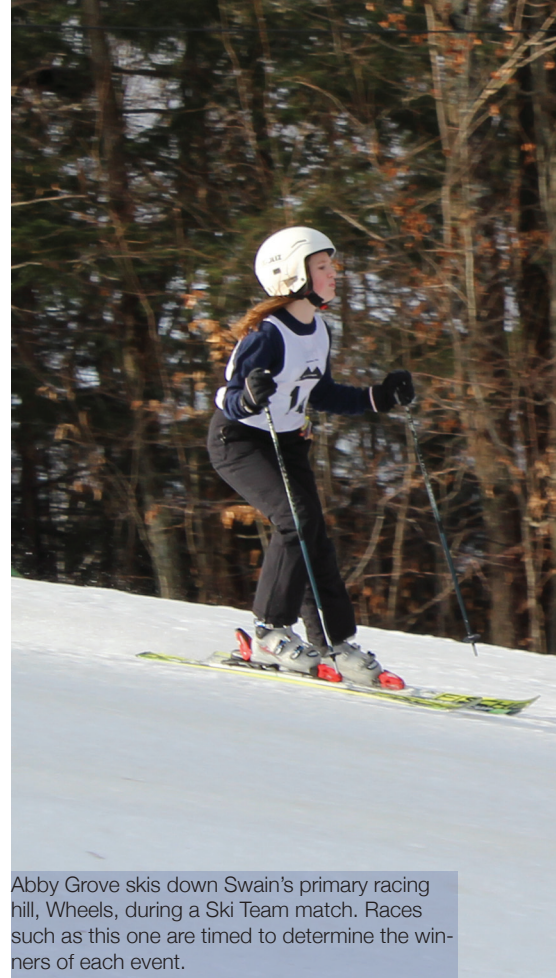
The weather has not been kind to the ski team this year. With limited snowfall, Swain (the ski resort where they practice) has only been open on weekends until four, which limits their ability to practice and race.

With their first race scheduled over break on January 4th, 2020, they're doing their best to stay in shape with regular practices in the fitness center after school. Their weekly schedule will begin once we have some actual snow and will consist of practices at Swain on Mondays and Thursdays,

tuning days on Tuesdays and Fridays, and race days on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Races can consist of both the Giant Slalom (GS) or the standard Slalom race. GS Races are longer and consist of more and wider turns, while Slalom Races are shorter and quicker with fewer turns at sharper angles.

Mrs. Cheryl Kress has taken up the role of head coach for the team this year and word on the street is that she's doing an excellent job. Story and Layout by Sidney Wildrick-Cole. Pictures by Kathy Chambliss.



Abby Grove skis down Swain's primary racing hill, Wheels, during a Ski Team match. Races such as this one are timed to determine the winners of each event.

## FALL SPORTS AWARDS

*Athletes, parents, and coaches come together to celebrate another great season on the books.*

The Fall Sports Awards was on Wednesday, November 6 at 7 pm. That night the coaches of each team talked about their team's season. The Boys Varsity Soccer awards were given to Will Tormey, who won the Most Valued Player Award, Laertes Cushing, who won the Most Improved Player Award, and Zach Patterson, who won the Sportsmanship Award.

The Girls Varsity Soccer coach was Mr. Jim Lucey. The awards were given

to Luci Lee, who won Most Improved, and Maeve Looney, who won Most Valuable Player and Logan Brown who won the Sportsmanship Award. The Girls Varsity Tennis coach was Mr. Brady and the awards were given to Sage Empson, who won Most Improved, and Lauren Kelly, who won Most Valuable Player, and Shannon Heinig, who won the Sportsmanship Award. Story and layout by Emily Campbell. Photos by Kathy Chambliss.





Not much is known about the Ski Club so I'm here to clear it up. The Ski Team and the Ski Club are NOT the same thing. The Ski Team races competitively and has regular practices and tuning days while the Ski Club skis recreationally on Saturdays. The Ski Club is an excellent way for students to get discounts on Swain tickets and lessons through the school in order to promote what is usually a sport with a high cost to enter. Every Saturday a bus takes members up to Swain from the school at 3:00 and leaves to bring them back around 9:00. The Ski Club is run by Mr. Steve Rech in the high school and Mr. Craig Mix in the elementary and they're always willing to help you get your ski legs. Skiing is an excellent sport to learn while you're young and this club is doing it right. While it's too late to get tickets through them this year, you still may be able to pick up a bus form and ride with them every Saturday. And hey! There's always next year too. The Ski Club extends its offer to all who wish to join and they hope to see you on the slopes.



**Above:** Bella Lang, Lina Michel, and Grace Harris chill on Wheels patiently for their race time. The top of the mountain can get pretty crowded as skiers and teams arrive to survey the conditions before a race.  
**Left:** Ethan Michel does his thing in the ski lounge, giving us this absolute gem. My bet is that those aren't his boots. The ski lounge is located above Swain's rental shop and is the hub for skiers to relax before, between, and after their races.



Recipients of awards gathered on stage to be recognized for their achievements this past season. Top row: Maeve Looney, Zack Ledbetter, Lauren Kelly and Logan Brown. Middle Row: Laertes Cushing, Zach Patterson, Alex Ormsby. Front Row: Will Tormey, Luci Lee, and Shannon Heinig.



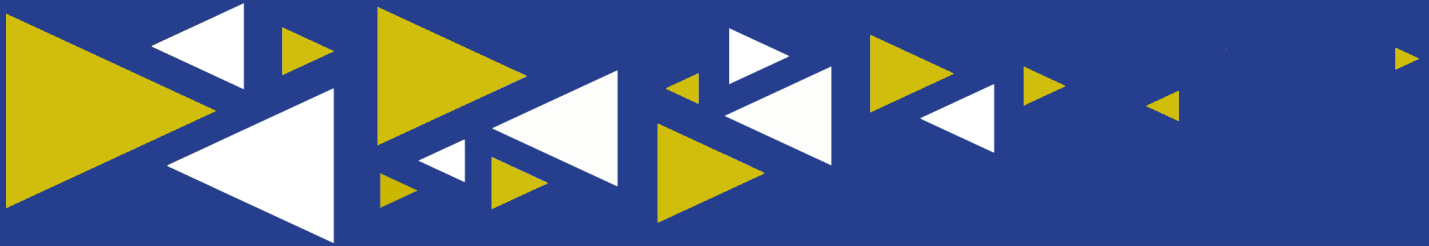
Sage Empson went onto the stage to be recognized for her achievement. This award was The Most Improved Player award for Varsity Tennis.



# WARRIORS ARE MADE ON THE MAT

*The wrestling team has struggled with their record this season, but they all come out on top as individuals with a true passion for the sport.*

**"I SHOOT I SCORE, HE SHOOTS I SCORE." DAN GABLE**



Many people wonder what is wrestling and why do people do it. Wrestling is perhaps the oldest and the purest sports known to man: there are no bats or balls, no pucks or sticks, no teammates to blame when you lose a match. There is no time to rethink strategy, regroup or even catch your breath. When you are there on the mat with your opponent and the referee says "wrestle," everything around you disappears, and it's just you two battling it out to see who becomes the victor.

Wrestling is an intense and highly competitive sport. It teaches the wrestler to grab great power and strength from within themselves; it forces the truly competitive wrestler to make themselves go, mentally and physically, beyond what they once

thought possible. Compared to all other sports, wrestling is perhaps the best sport for physical development. When a wrestler trains, they train every muscle group and they also constantly improve their flexibility, stamina, balance, speed, and technique to win against their next opponent. Wrestlers learn the value of preparation and hard work, and the role it plays in achieving one's life goals. What wrestlers learn from the mat, they can transfer to real life. They are self reliant, they are mentally and physically fit, they have a great work ethic, they are self disciplined, competitive and responsible for what they do, and they always have a goal in mind.

This year has been a tough year, because of all of the new wrestlers who have never experienced how

aggressive the sport is. Our team has gone 14-21 throughout the overall season. The team has struggled due to grades and lack of discipline from some, which caused holes in the team's line up, though individually the juniors, seniors, sophomores, and a few freshmen have stepped up to help their team. Every team has its struggles and it is no different in wrestling, but it is more about the individuality, mentality, and physicality of the sport. According to Coach Gregory Cook, "If our conditioning isn't what it needs to be, then we run farther and harder. If we are not strong enough, we lift heavier and more often. These things just don't happen for us; we must make them happen." Story and layout by Colton Cook

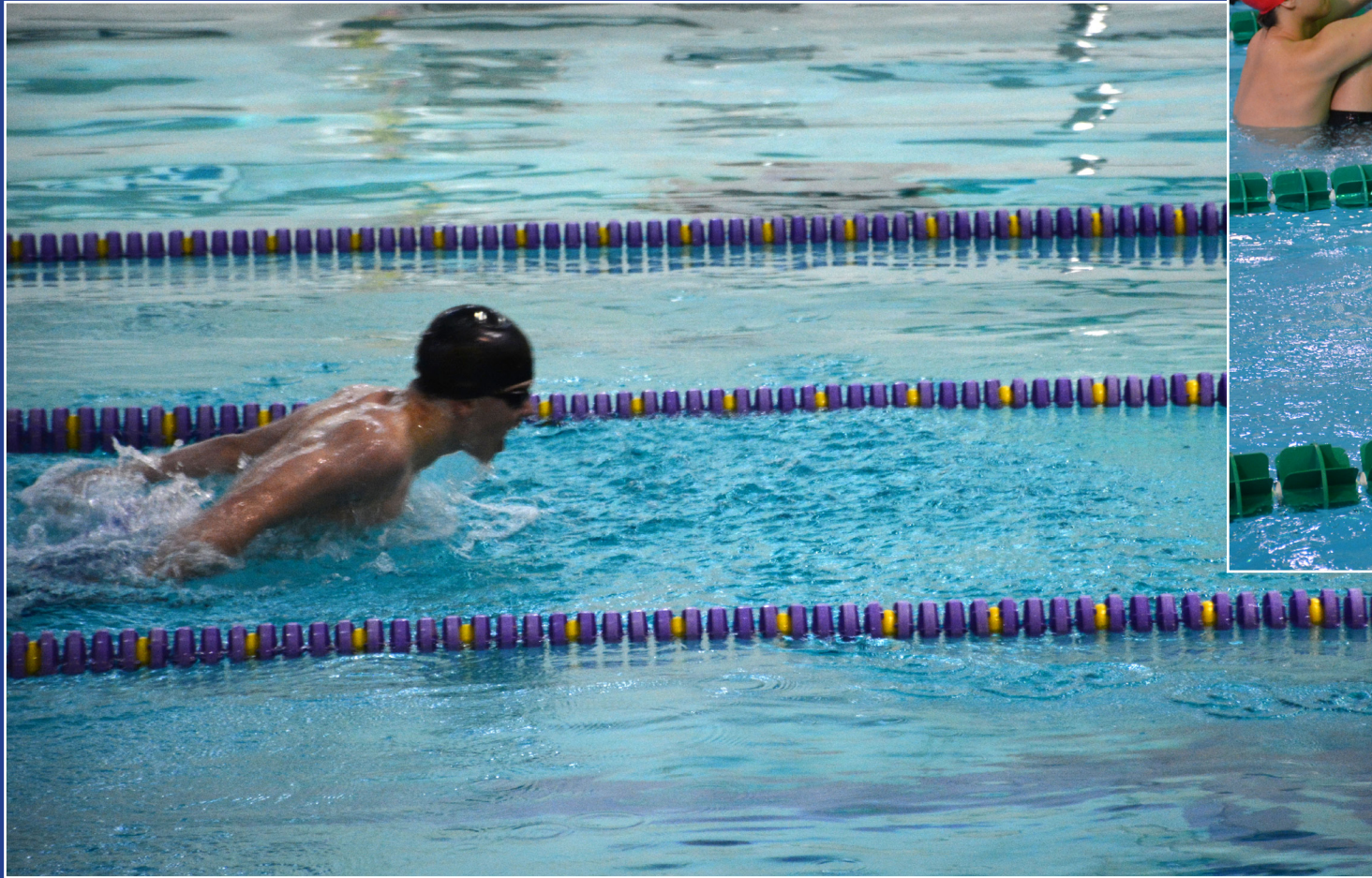
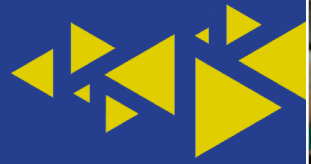




**Top:** Sophomore Benjamin Lloyd wrestles his opponent from Addison Central School, at home. **Bottom left:** Senior Captain Laertes Cushing wrestles at 160, and wins against his opponent from Addison at home. **Bottom center:** Freshman Shane Davidson Jr. wrestles at 126 and wins against his opponent from Maple Grove central school, at Boliver-Richburg's Wrestling Dual Tournament. **Bottom right:** Sophomore, Scott Mills wrestles at 152 against his opponent from Addison. Photos by Karin Thayer and Colton Cook.



# Swimming



The varsity swim team has powered through their season so far with a 15-1-1 record. This year has seen one of the biggest teams Alfred Almond has had in many years, putting them at 20 swimmers. A large group of talented kids has rendered the team almost undefeated so far this season. Their toughest competition comes from the Campbell-Savona Panthers, who have a tradition of excellence in their program and are the only team that has come to be

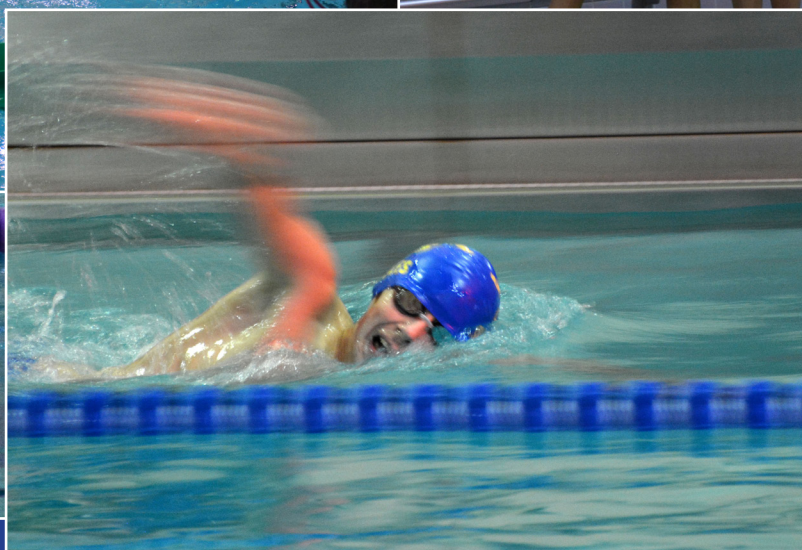
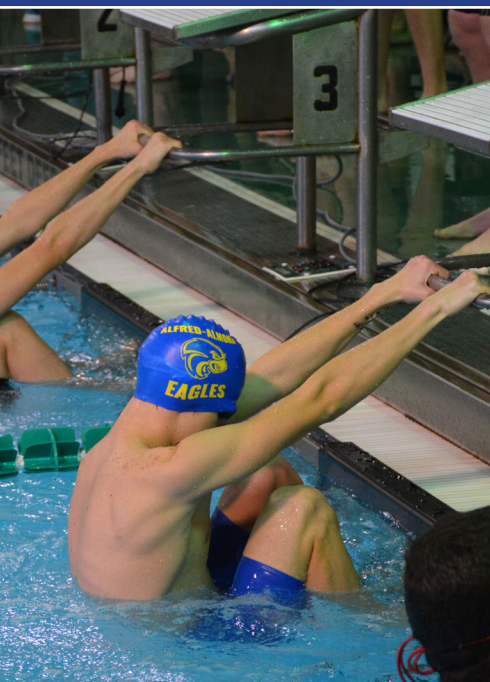
an even match for the Eagles.

Recently, Alfred Almond hosted the Panthers for the yearly home meet honoring the seniors. The match came down to a relay race where Alfred Almond's team was disqualified due to a teammate leaving the block early. The meet ended in the Campbell-Savona's victory of 50-52.

When asked about the upcoming Section Five meet, sophomore captain Gavin Dwyer said, "We expect top two or three at least if ev-

everything goes right at sectionals." This year's swim team is expected to break a few previous team records. The team has not done this well since 2012, almost a decade ago. Senior captain Ben Deutsch said, "We have four or five kids that are really close to breaking records in some of the events. It's so satisfying to be ending my eight years of swimming which such a winning season." Story by Laertes Cushing. Layout by Ben Deutsch. All photos by Jennifer Dworak.





- Far Left:** Sprinting through the water to gain some needed points, Liam Harris wins the 100 butterfly in a quad meet facing Wellsville, Canisteo-Greenwood, and Hornell.
- Far Top:** Swimmers are in the water for the 100 backstroke. Paul Drake prepared to win the event at the HAC invitational.
- Far Bottom:** The crowd cheers on Paul Drake swimming the 200 freestyle in a close meet against Campbell-Savona.
- Far Right:** Alfred-Almond cheers on their teammate Lucian Fioretto as he swims the 100 butterfly. Hoping to win the event against Canisteo-Greenwood.



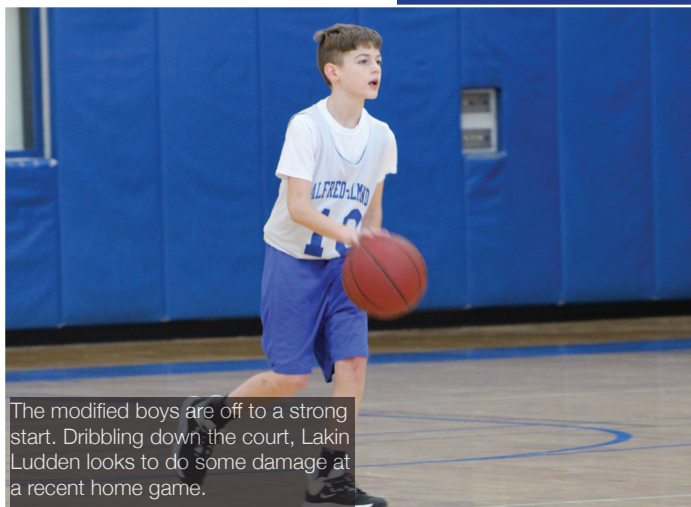


# ALFRED-ALMOND BASKETBALL

Get to know your Alfred-Almond Basketball Teams



"With little numbers the girls have worked very hard and worked towards great improvements. I am excited for the rest of the year and what it has to come."- Molly Soppe



The modified boys are off to a strong start. Dribbling down the court, Lakin Ludden looks to do some damage at a recent home game.



"The ladies work hard; we have a strong defense. We will continue to work on our shooting to finish the year strong."- Diane Chamberlain.



"We are a young team, with only two returning players from last year, and we are improving each day with team chemistry."- Brian Marlott





"The girls varsity basketball team has played very hard this year. We are an experienced team with size and speed. When we play our best, we should compete with anyone. We are looking forward to finishing the season strong and surprising some teams in sectionals."- Tom Weller

The Alfred Almond girls basketball team has had many ups and down to their season. With a record of 4-8, the Eagles are led by captains Logan Brown and Zoe Balinsky. When asked about the season so far, Brown said, "At the moment we have started out iffy, the games that we play are competitive. I think and believe we will be successful. We just need to just get some things down." A key leader on the team, Brown has faith for the future success for not only herself but the entirety of the team.

I also gained a first hand opinion on the best and worst games of the season. Here is how they broke down. The best game of the season in Brown's opinion was the away game at Jasper-Troupsburg. After being up for an entire half, the Eagles lost their lead after a clutch three-point. The ladies battled back in the fourth quarter to eventually come up on top.

The ladies may have faced adversity so far this year, but greater challenges await for the team as they must grow stronger with every passing day.



# WORLD NEWS









# HELD WITHOUT RIGHTS

*Local family fights unlawful detainment of human rights activist in China: Jaixi Ding*



Sophie Luo and her two daughters have been a part of Alfred community for 7 years. Luo, originally from Beijing, made her way to the small town of Alfred to start a fresh new life in America. Things seemed to be falling into place for the Ding family. There was only one problem. Mr. Jiaxi Ding did not leave China in his fight against the tyranny of the Chinese government. Ding is the husband of Luo and father of two Alfred Almond alumni. Ding is not only a father but a powerful activist against censorship and authoritarian Chinese rule.

On December 16 at 9:00, Ding was arrested at a friend's house in

Beijing by officers titled "Chinese Domestic Security Policeman." Luo and the rest of her family have been in distress about his detainment.

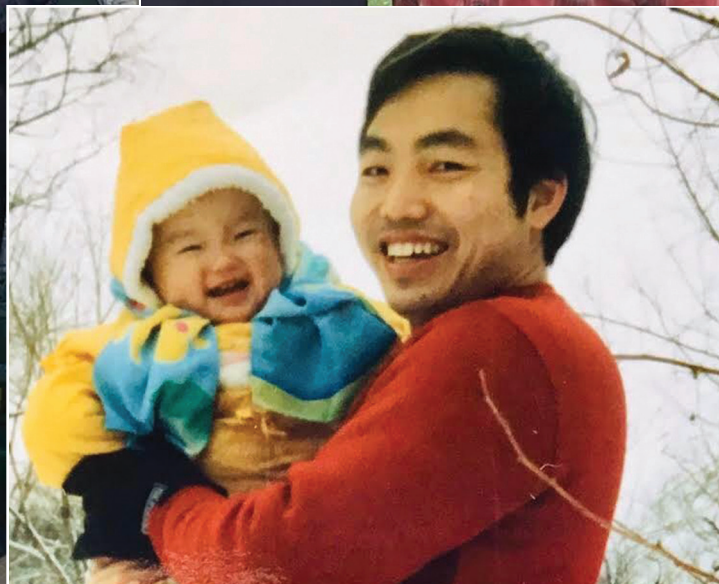
The true problem with his arrest is that the Chinese government refuses to supply the family with any information as to where he is being kept and why. The only information given to the family is that Ding is in a "designated area" and that not even his lawyer is able to speak to him.

This is not the first time this family has dealt with the Chinese government attempting to tear them in two. In April of 2013, the Chinese government arrested Ding for advocating for equal educa-

tion rights for migrant workers. He was wrongly convicted of disrupting public order and imprisoned for three and a half years. When he was finally released he spent 2 months in the United States until he finally returned to Beijing to continue his work.

After his return the Chinese government refused to allow him to travel anywhere, not even to his daughter's graduation. Caroline Ding, his daughter who graduated from A-A last year made a statement about the issue: "When we just got the news it was really hard. I don't really know how to describe what I felt at the time--it was like a mixture of grief, anger, guilt, and fear. Mostly fear at the thought that





he might be in a vegetative state when he comes out. I have heard of stories of other human rights lawyers who have come out. I also feel guilty that I did not try to talk to him more. Now I try not to think about it too much, and with many things in college to distract me it's not hard to. I have tried to focus on helping my mom and think of what I can do. Doing something about it instead of thinking and worrying usually makes me feel a bit better."

The entire family has been struggling these past weeks and needs support not only from people close to the problem, but every single person that feels the rights of a

human being cannot be stripped based on opinion.

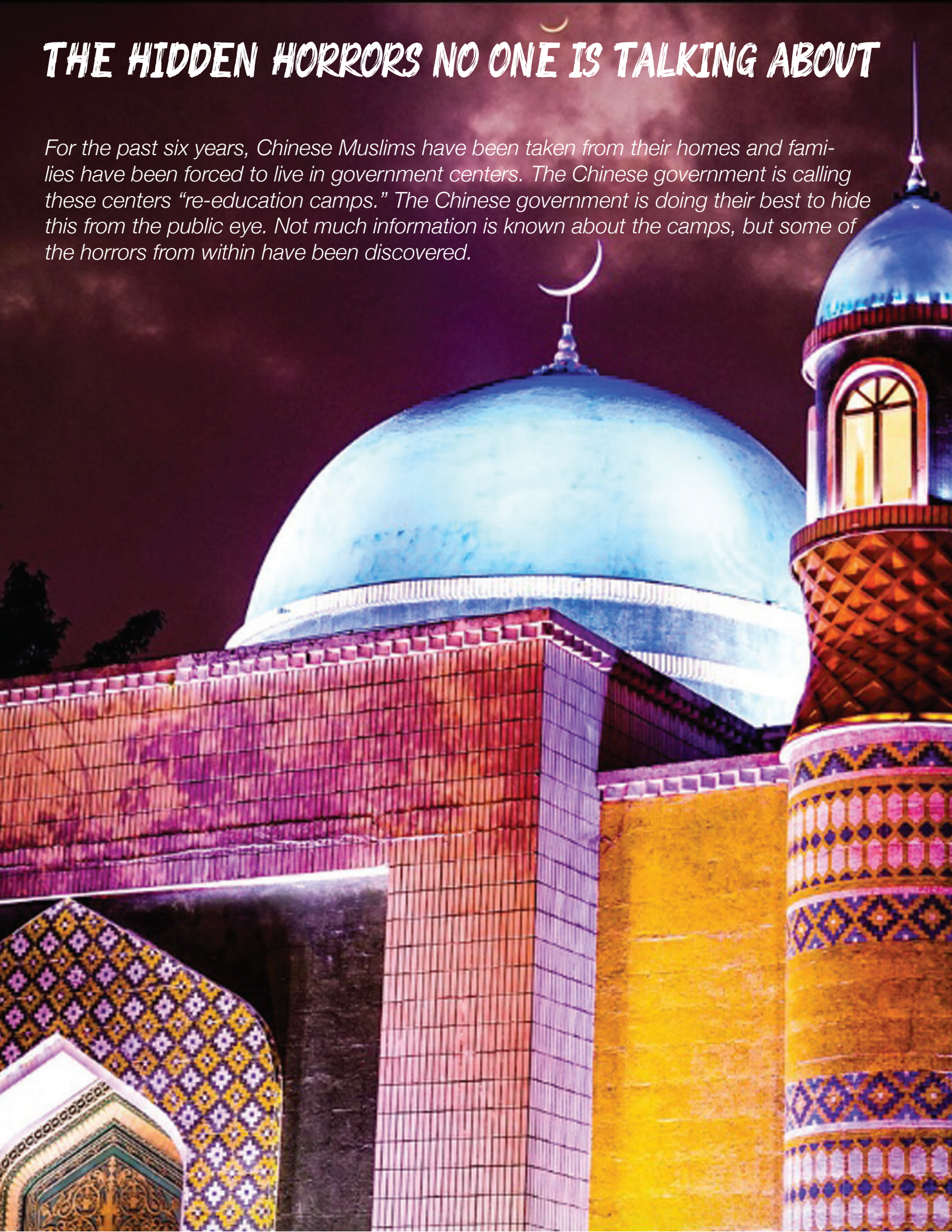
If you have an interest in this human rights issue, please watch Sophie Luo's YouTube video titled, "Jiaxi Ding Forced Disappearance." Story by Will Tormey. Layout by Logan Brown. Photos by The Ding Family.





# THE HIDDEN HORRORS NO ONE IS TALKING ABOUT

*For the past six years, Chinese Muslims have been taken from their homes and families have been forced to live in government centers. The Chinese government is calling these centers “re-education camps.” The Chinese government is doing their best to hide this from the public eye. Not much information is known about the camps, but some of the horrors from within have been discovered.*





Imagine being taken from your home, forced to move to a camp, separated from your family, enrolled in mandatory classes with training on laws and regulations, and forced to renounce your religion and culture. It's hard to imagine, isn't it? This is the reality for an estimated 3 million Chinese Muslims. Since 2014, the Chinese government has been forcibly sending Uighur Muslims to re-education and vocational training camps.

The Uighurs are a minority ethnic group of Muslims. There are millions of Uighur people who live in China. For the last five years the Chinese government claims to be sending Muslims to vocational camps to counteract terrorism.

Director of the Moyu County Vocational Education and Training Center, Bu'ayiximu Abulizi said that the role of these centers is to change the minds and thoughts of those living in them. "Our center is to prevent terrorism thoughts from happening," Abulizi said. "If we leave terrorism thoughts to be developed, it is very easy to have riots or other issues."

There is not a lot known about what goes in these camps; however NBC News and a British news station both have toured the centers. The networks reported seeing clean but small dormitories, usually with four people to a room. There are mandatory uniforms and the detainees go to classes all day long. The Chinese government refused to answer most of the news networks questions about these centers. They would not reveal how many of these centers exist but there is an estimated 143 camps. It was a rare occasion letting those two news networks have access to the centers, as usually no one is allowed entrance and hardly any information about them is available.

Security in these camps is abundant; guards with machine guns stand watch around the perimeter, and a barbed wire fence surrounds each center as well as many security cameras.

There are some children in these camps; in many cases the children are separated from their families. The Chinese government claims they are taking children from their parents in order to "re-educate" them, telling them that

the way they were raised is incorrect and encouraging them to renounce their culture and religion. Some parents in these centers are allowed to speak with their children once a week, but there are many parents who have no idea where their children are.

Although there are an estimated 3 million detainees in these camps, there are thousands of Uighar people unaccounted for. In many cases if an Uighar speaks out against the Chinese government, shortly afterwards this person disappears. There are some people who have been missing since 2014 and their families don't think that they will ever hear from their missing family members again.

In order to be released from these re-education camps, detainees must "graduate" by passing a series of tests on Chinese law and customs and vocational tests in specific skill areas. Detainees must also pledge allegiance to communism and the Chinese government and admit they were wrong in following Islam. Very few detainees have been released but some have. One of these rare individuals is Sayragul Sauytbay, whose experience was different than what the journalists witnessed. According to Sauytbay there were about 20 detainees per room; they were all chained to the wall and monitored by ceiling cameras. Sauytbay and many others were often deprived of food. Torture, a common occurrence, was used to interrogate detainees as well as punish them, but Sauytbay witnessed some being tortured just as human experiments. Certain detainees would be subjected to medical procedures with no justification.

Sauytbay was able to leave one of these camps, but there are still millions of Uighars detained in these camps. Not much is known about the conditions but evidence shows harsh and unfair treatment of the detainees. They have been taken from their homes and separated from their families just because of the religion they follow. Despite international humanitarian organizations' efforts to improve the Uighar situation in China, there does not seem to be an end in sight to their oppression. Story and layout by Grace Yarnal



Muslim girls outside of school. Many muslim children have been forcibly taken from their families. Photo by Omar A.



The Id Kah Mosque in Kasghar Prefecture China. The city of Kasghar Prefecture and the surrounding cities are where the majority of the Uighur Muslims lived before being forced into re-education camps. Photo by Melinda Chan.



Muslim boys outside of their school. In recent years the Chinese government has closed down many Muslim schools, forcing the children that once attended them to enroll in another school or live in the re-education camps. Photo by Wolf Biege.



# Fires Rage Across a Continent

*As Australia burns, animals and people near and far are in danger.*

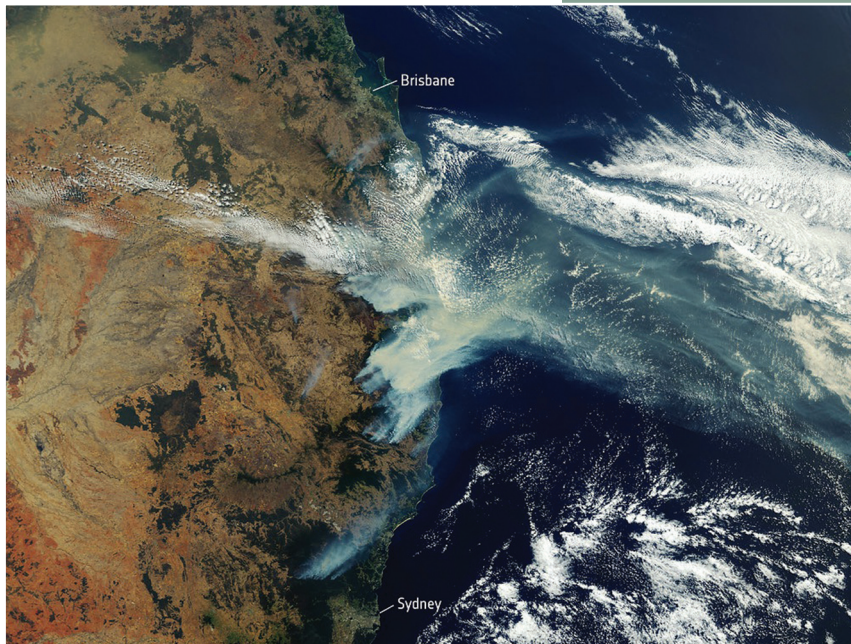
The nearly 100 Australian Bush fires, burning in the states of Queensland and New South Wales, have burned at least 2.2 million hectares. The fires have also destroyed at least 3,000 homes in New South Wales and nationwide have killed at least 28 people. A group of fires north west of Sydney have merged into one “mega fire” that some say is “too big to put out”.

The city of Sydney has about 5,000,000 residents that are exposed to hazardous air quality. The smoke from the fires mixed with the air around Sydney and has made the air quality 12 times worse than the hazardous level. On January 8, NASA said that the smoke had made it halfway across the world and could cause problems in air quality around the world. The smoke could affect air quality in South America, and, closer to Australia, New Zealand. Glaciers in New Zealand have turned to a brown color and could melt faster. The snow may melt faster due to the dark particles from the smoke preventing the snow from reflecting sunlight.

Australian Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, claims that there is no evidence that links the fires to climate change, despite the facts that the annual temperature of Australia increased 1.8° since 1910 and the length of the fire season has increased across the continent. January-October 2019 have been the second driest and second warmest on record. Story and layout by Riley Winters.

**Top:** This house near Betemans Bay is one of thousands destroyed by the fires. Photo by Bruce Dettorres.

**Bottom:** The fires in Queensland and New South Wales seen from space on November 12. Photo by the European Space Agency.





## Koalas Endangered

There are between 40,000 and 100,000 koalas in the wild; the fires are posing a threat to the species because the fire is destroying their habitat and spreading too fast for the koalas to escape. The fires have destroyed about 80% of the koalas' habitat and have been so destructive that even some of the koala bodies may never be found.

In November at least 1,000 koalas were killed along with an estimated 1 billion other animals such as wombats, kangaroos, potoroos, and flying foxes. Animal Training Enterprises has been training dogs to help rescue koalas. The dogs have saved dozens of koalas. A koala hospital started a fundraiser to help the affected koalas with a goal of \$25,000 and has raised over \$1,600,000.

"I just hope there is something to come back too."- Molly Tulk

Sophomore Molly Tulk, native to Australia, feels that Prime Minister Scott Morrison hasn't done enough to deal with the fires. Morrison went on holiday to Hawaii while Australia was burning, which doesn't put forth that he is acting in the best interest of his country. Tulk went on to say that she believes climate change needs to be treated like a serious issue and action needs to be taken, starting with cutting carbon emissions.



**Top:** Koalas live on plants that have been lost in the fires which makes food scarce. Animals have been taken in by people to protect them. Photo by Parée

**Bottom:** Animals like wallabies have also been affected by the fires because of loss of food and habitat. Photo by Dwayne Madden



# FOUR FACTIONS, ONE COUNTRY

*The civil war of Syria has raged amongst the factions between the people and the government for over 10 years, taking thousands of people from this world. Mothers, fathers, sons and daughters have all been affected from this ongoing war for a new government, especially when there are multiple factions with many different views about how their home should be controlled.*

Bashar Al Assad has been the president of Syria since 2000. Since his "election" (or receiving it from his father Hefaz Al Assad, president of Syria from 1972 till his death in 2000), he has caused violence to his citizens.

Because of this violence, the Arab League, the United States, the European Union and other countries have condemned Al Assad's actions. As of April, 2019, over 5.7 million Syrians have fled the nation as refugees.

When the civil war first started in 2011, four major factions started to fight for control over the country: the Kurdish Alliance, ISIS, an alliance between the Nusra Front and Ahrar-Al-Sham, and the Assad Regime which is being backed by Russia and Iran. ISIS controlled most of the Syria, but after the death of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's death by suicide while being raided by US Delta Force troopers on October 27 last year, they have lost most of their territory to the other factions. Because of this, they are free to fight each other more often than usual. Syrian Government has had to destroy their chemical

weapons, and has been fighting this war for a decade.

Just recently this year our ally Turkey commenced Operation Peace Spring, which is the moving of Kurdish people from the border to give the 2 million Syrian refugees a place to resettle. Most of the other factions have really been defeated and the main ones at this point in time are the Syrian government's forces and the Kurdish Alliance, with a few spots controlled by the ISIL, (another part of ISIS), like the city of Talul al Safa. A few rebel forces remain here and there throughout the country.

The Russian backed Syrian army has committed a full scale offensive into Syrian rebel territory, and they are attempting to capture the Idlib province from the rebels. This offensive, since July 7, has resulted in the deaths of 554 men, women, and children, while an estimated 2,000 more have been injured from bombings on the town of Ariha. There is a cease-fire between Russia and Turkey but the attacks are still happening. Story and layout Colton Cook. Photos by Dimashqi Lens on Flickr.com



Rebel Soldiers patrolling the war-torn area that was once their homes.



Rebel soldiers planning an attack on a location and loading their weapons for their inevitable battle.





Syrian Children have to go to school underground so they are safe from the bombings happening on the surface. More than 14,000 children have died since the beginning of the war in 2011.



Two Syrian army tanks were destroyed in front of a Mosque in the city of Azaz, which is also the site of famous battles between the Mirdeseds of Aleppo and the Byzantine Empire and the Crusaders versus the Seljuk Turks.



ALFRED ALMOND MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

# Scholastic Reading Club

VISIT [SCHOLASTIC.COM/BOOKCLUB](http://SCHOLASTIC.COM/BOOKCLUB)

## CLASS CODE WBRK ORDERS DUE -

MONDAY 1/27/2

TUESDAY 2/25/20

- ONLINE ORDERS REQUIRE ELECTRONIC  
PAYMENT

- PAPER ORDER FORMS CAN BE SUBMITTED TO  
MRS. TRAUTMAN WITH CASH OR A CHECK MADE  
OUT TO "SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB"  
BOOKS ARE SHIPPED TO THE CLASSROOM FOR  
FREE & WILL ARRIVE MID-FEBRUARY.

"THERE IS MORE TREASURE IN BOOKS THAN IN ALL THE PIRATE'S  
LOOT ON TREASURE ISLAND." - WALT DISNEY.



# WRITING LAB

Learn to write. Write to learn.

shepherds are  
available all  
lunch mods!

- \* WRITING ESSAYS \*
- \* RESEARCHING TOPICS \*
- \* GENERATING IDEAS \*
- \* PLANNING AND POLISHING \*
- \* CREATIVE WRITING \*



## LAVA

Submit your original creative writing and artwork for selection in our first annual publication of the Literary and Visual Arts Magazine.

## LIT FEST

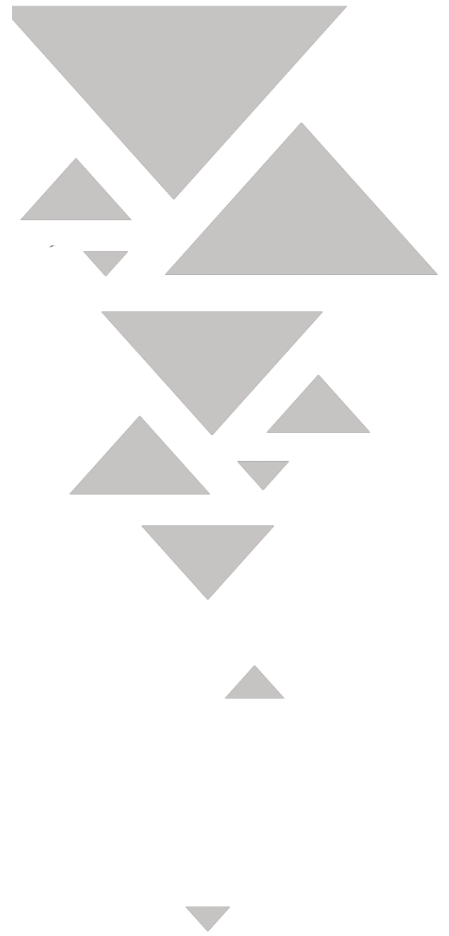
Submit your original writing for selection in our Jr/Sr High Literary Festival, a coffeehouse event on **April 28** in the HS cafeteria.

CALL FOR  
WRITING  
SUBMISSIONS!

**DEADLINE: MARCH 27**

ALL GENRES ELIGIBLE  
POETRY: MAX 40 LINES  
DRAMA: 1 SCENE  
PROSE: MAX 2,000 WORDS

email your submission to [jsnyder@aacsapps.com](mailto:jsnyder@aacsapps.com)



THE MATH TEAM WILL BE SELLING

*candy  
grams*

during the lunch mods February 6th -12th.  
Each card costs \$1.

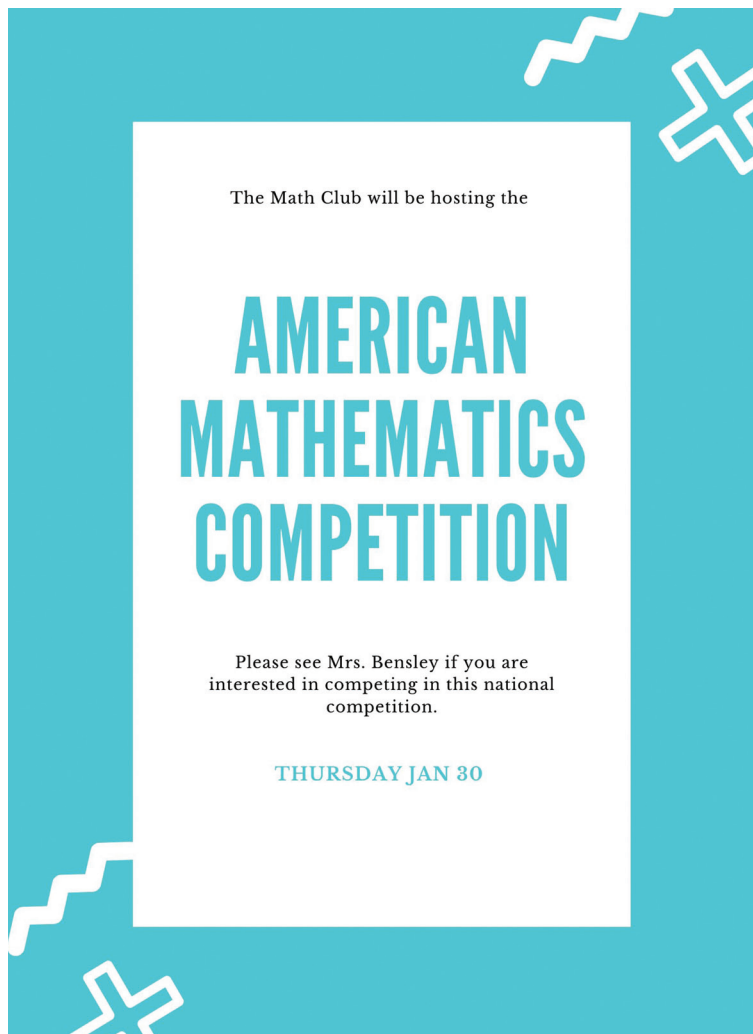
Allergy free candy will be attached to your  
Candy Gram and delivered to the recipient  
on Friday, February 14th.





# IN THIS MONTH'S DOGGO CORNER

This month the Doggo Corner features Sandy, the beautiful golden retriever that has graced the Napolitano residence for the past several years. She was born on April 20 but always acts like it was yesterday. Her fur is softer than silk but she loathes baths. She is afraid of horses and loud noises. She loves being brushed, rolling around (especially in the snow), meeting new people, getting attention (of which she is all deserving), car rides, and Wegmans brand cookies. Her favorite toy is her pink bunny and she can usually be found on or under Noah's bed. She gets along with everyone and every dog she meets and that's why she's made of pure gold.







# L.A.V.A.

*the AACS Literary and Visual Arts Magazine*

## WANTS YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR ORIGINAL ARTWORK & CREATIVE WRITING

### DEADLINE MARCH 27

#### WRITING GUIDELINES

- POETRY: MAX 40 LINES
- DRAMA: 1 SCENE
- PROSE: MAX 2,000 WORDS

#### ALL GENRES ARE ELIGIBLE!

- PERSONAL NARRATIVE
- PERSUASIVE ARGUMENT
- CREATIVE NONFICTION
- SHORT STORY
- POETRY & LYRICS
- DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH
- DRAMA
- AND MANY MORE!

send entries to  
[jsnyder@aacsapps.com](mailto:jsnyder@aacsapps.com)

#### ARTWORK GUIDELINES

#### ALL MEDIA ARE ELIGIBLE!

- DRAWING
- PAINTING
- PRINTMAKING
- GRAPHIC DESIGN
- DIGITAL ART
- COLLAGE
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- 3D ART

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[apowers@aacsapps.com](mailto:apowers@aacsapps.com)





