

# the REGISTER

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## Out with the old, in with the new

Head football coach Lance Griffin has parted ways with Central's athletic program. A new coach has yet to be decided upon.

PAGE 9

## Student photographers

In the age of the smart phone, nearly everyone is a photographer, but these two seniors' exemplary skills allow them to stand out.

PAGE 15



## The infamous Keystone XL Pipeline

The tension over the Keystone XL Pipeline's construction literally hits close to home.

PAGE 23



Photo Courtesy of **BRIA GILMORE**

Pictured from left are juniors Kincaid Johnson, Bria Gilmore and senior and DECA president Jessi Ferguson at a fundraiser.

## SOARING WITH HOPE

Two juniors work with a local organization to educate and aid children from lower-income families.

**Zoia Morrow**  
executive editor

Occasionally, different clubs throughout Central will pop into the spotlight for a minute or two, but DECA has maintained a consistent place of relevance for several years.

For the 2017-2018 school year, juniors and DECA members Bria Gilmore and Kincaid Johnson decided to partner with the Hope Center to raise money for their after-school program. DECA is a competitive business marketing group that focuses on educating students about various aspects of marketing, entrepreneurship in business, finance and, especially for Gilmore and Johnson, hospitality. The community service project Kincaid and Gilmore are working on through DECA is called "Soaring with Hope."

DECA offers a community service category to all its members which consists of particular rules to follow when executing their projects in order for them to be eligible for competition. Members must serve a business in their local communities, write about their experience and examine what they plan to achieve. Overall, "it is most important to get your school and community involved," Johnson said.

Gilmore and Johnson have partnered with the Hope Center for their project. The Hope Center is a place for inner-city children and young adults to turn to as a safe place. A place where they can do their homework, have access to sports clubs for all ages and become exposed to several different career paths. "I chose the Hope Center because I went there as a kid with Salem Baptist Church and it just had a positive impact on my life. I feel like what they are doing is a really good thing," Gilmore said. The point is to raise money for the Hope Center's after school program. "They have a really good job management program where they go through this academy and in the end, they help them find a job," Gilmore said.

Johnson and Gilmore have moved the project along by raising money through Central-related activities. Throughout the football season, Johnson and Gilmore sold merchandise that correlated with the home game themes for varying amounts that contribute to the proceeds. This Halloween, they sold 'boo-grams' which were pumpkin shaped notes with a lollipop stuck on the back of them for people to send to their friends and favorite teachers at Central. To spread the word, they put their business card on the back of each

DECA on page 8

## Prayer room rapidly gains popularity

**Molly Ashford**  
staff writer

In the Islamic faith, one of the five pillars that the religion is based upon is known as Salat, which directly translates to worship. Muslims typically pray five times a day, the noon prayer (Dhuhr) falling directly in the middle of fifth hour. For some Muslim students, finding a place to pray during the school day can be a challenge, but at Central, the dramatorium is set aside during lunch hours to provide young Muslims with a place to peacefully complete their midday prayers.

Although there was a similar setup last year, the prayer room has only recently attracted attention from Muslim students this year. With the help of assistant principal Dionne Kirksey,

sophomore Sumayyah Rab and her sister got the prayer room up and running once again. For a while, it was just the two of them, but recently, Rab said that two other girls began coming during their lunch hour. "I think there is a large Muslim population in Central, but we're not very connected with each other. I hope that this will serve to connect us as a community."

She hopes that as word gets out about the prayer room, the number of attendees will grow.

"If it gets much larger we may need to relocate from the dramatorium," Kirksey said, "For now, though, it works as a space for the group we have. I think it's important to accommodate a space for them to celebrate our diversity."

"We usually bring our own prayer mats,

ROOM on page 8

## New push for stricter tardy policy generated positive results

**Sydney Prescott**  
staff writer

"No Tardy November" was a reminder to students that students who choose not to attend class run the risk of being sent home if they refuse to attend class or cooperate with staff members," says Dr. Edward Bennett, the principal of Central. He and the other administration instituted No-Tardy November to reduce tardies and truancies, especially because they had an influx of tardies in the month of October. They plan to continue with this policy, and give it a new name each month.

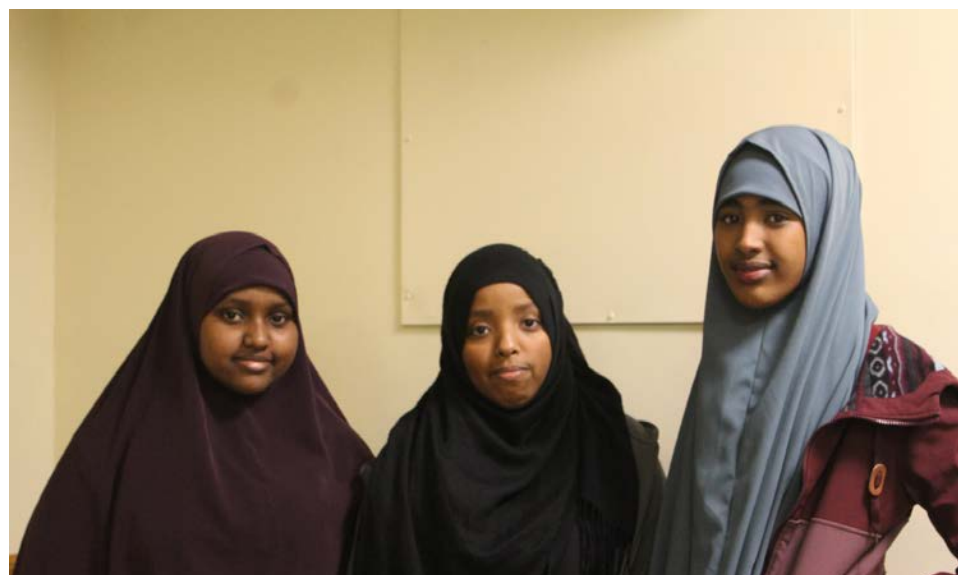
"Academics are number one for Central... being on time is a life skill... and it is fair," Bennett said, explaining the reasons why Central requires prompt attendance. Central is not alone in its struggle with tardiness and truancies; different schools across America have tried multiple ways to have students be on time. At some schools, the doors lock 30 minutes after school and late students are required to go home. Others encourage teachers to give warm-ups that ultimately lead to a summative grade. Central has decided to go with the system of random selection; called Tardy Roulette last year and Tardy Sweepstakes this year. This system randomly selects students that were tardy from a period each day to have an after-school detention.

No-Tardy November came about because, in the month of October, Bennett says "Tardies were higher than normal...and we wanted to hold students accountable". Along with the same Tardy Sweepstakes policy, they have also increased the need for hall-way passes, as walking around without a pass can result in being sent home. Bennett says that "school safety is incredibly important," and that by checking the halls, it keeps students and staff safer.

The OPS district has also noticed the security issue for students and other people being able to come and go. Due to this risk, they plan to install a new system in all the schools that will be electrically and magnetically sealed next year. This will cause the doors to beep whenever opened and security to know which doors are being opened and where.

Despite rumors going around, No-Tardy November was very effective. Looking at the numbers from October to November, tardies were down 39 percent. Since it worked to show students, "the importance of getting class to time," said Bennett, administration plans to keep the theme going. "I believe students who are tardy don't like it while people who are not tardy like it. It's only fair," Bennett said. This December, they have dubbed it "Check the Halls December," and we will take suggestions for each month's new name. "It is possible that tardies and skipping will go up after November, but I think that we just have to be creative," Bennett said.

All in all, Bennett believes No-Tardy November was a success, will continue, and will have a different name each month.



MOLLY ASHFORD | The Register

Pictured are three students who encourage the use of the school's new prayer room.





Photo Courtesy of LILY WEAK

LEFT: Junior Lily Weak performs in "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever!" at the Rose Theater RIGHT: Weak signs an autograph for a young audience member after a show.

## Junior expands her skill set through roles in local productions

**Simone Davis**  
staff writer

Central students possess talents both in and outside of these walls. This year, the Rose Theater will be presenting the show "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever!" and junior Lily Weak is a part of the show.

"It's my first time participating in a show outside of school," says Weak. Though this is her first time branching out, she is no stranger to the stage. Weak has participated in the show "Honk," "Cinderella," "Grease" and "The Somewhat True Tale of Robinhood." In addition to these shows, she has also performed in seven OPS summer musicals, with featured roles as Wendy in "Peter Pan" and Little Cosette in "Les Misérables."

"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever!" is a play based on a book written by Mary Robinson. It tells the story of a Christmas play that takes place every year at the main character Beth

Bradley's church every year once the status quo is disrupted by the pageant director breaking her leg. The story is meant to be fun and light-hearted and a holiday treat.

Weak heard about the show through the Rose's website. Once she saw that there was a potential part for her, she decided that it would be fun to audition.

"There were open auditions where you could sign up for a time slot, and then come back and do a standard audition. Since they liked me, I advanced to the dance auditions," Weak said. "By the next day, I got an email about callbacks. A few weeks later my dad got an email offering me the part."

Once Weak got the part, they began rehearsals. Shows at the Rose are a slightly different experience than school productions, as one is more of a professional setting.

"My favorite part of the production has been learning about what it takes to work in a professional environment," Weak said. "It gives me a look at what working in a profes-

sional theater might look like in the future for me." Spending time outside of school to work on a production has been fun for weak, but it also is time consuming.

"My least favorite part of the production has been trying to catch up on all of the homework that I've had to miss for the show," Weak said.

But all in all, Weak is enjoying her experience in performing in the show. "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever!" will take place at the Rose Theater on from Dec. 8-23 on the weekends, with evening performances at 7:00 and matinee performances at 2:00 p.m.

Weak will probably be seen in more productions in the community as she states, "It's something that I've really wanted to do for a long time, and it's an experience that I wouldn't trade for anything."

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

I am so excited and honored to present to you the third issue of *The Register* of the 2017-2018 school year. Some major changes have been made to the paper to enhance the appearance of professionalism and sophistication. The front page of this issue is much different than the two previous issues and issues of the past.

In the design of this paper, I drew inspiration from various iconic works such as *The New York Times*, the *Omaha World Herald*, *Politico* and *Time* magazine.

We want this student newspaper to be an interactive experience. Join the conversation on our Facebook: *The Central High Register*, our Twitter: @CHS\_Press, our Instagram: @chs\_press and our Flickr: chspress. In addition, if any of our readers are interested in writing a piece for the paper or illustrating a graphic, we highly encourage it. Thank you for your continued support and readership of *The Register*.

*Anna Kaminski*

Anna Kaminski  
Editor-in-Chief

The Omaha Central High School Register seeks to inform its readers accurately as to items of entertainment, interest and importance. The staff strives to uphold the principles of journalism in all of its proceedings.

The Register is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA), the Nebraska High School Press Association (NHSPA), the Journalism Education Association (JEA), Quill and Scroll and the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA).

The Register is an 11-time Best-in-Show winner for large newspapers at the JEA/NSPA national conventions in San Francisco, Boston, Phoenix, Dallas, Washington, D.C., Seattle and Chicago. The Register also won first place in Front Page News Layout for large newspapers at the JEA/NSPA convention in St. Louis.

It is the goal of the Central High Register to represent the student body in issues affecting their lives as young people and students. If you feel that we are not covering an issue that is important to you, we welcome contributing writers who bring fresh ideas to the issues. If you would like to write a story for your student newspaper, please contact Hillary Blayney at [hillary.blayney@ops.org](mailto:hillary.blayney@ops.org) or come to room 029 to discuss your idea.

The Register has won multiple NSPA Pacemakers, which is considered the Pulitzer Prize of high school journalism. It has also won many Cornhusker awards from NHSPA, and has been awarded the Gold and Silver Crowns from CSPA for its overall work.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of The Register staff and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Central High School.

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Special thanks to all the faculty and staff of Omaha Central High School and Omaha Public Schools. Your cooperation with our students helps us maintain a professional atmosphere in order to teach media education.

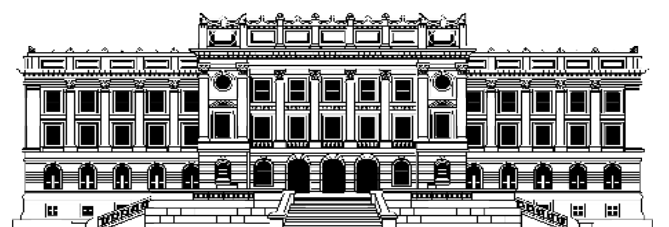
Thank you, readers.

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# Student does not allow past to define her

**Simret Habte**  
staff writer

Junior Nae Mae has lived a life not many can relate to. She was born in a refugee camp in Thailand. Her parents and siblings were forced to flee their home in the Kayah state of Myanmar. At the age of ten, she, her parents, and siblings came to the United States. Although she has left the refugee camp, it's made a lasting impression on her and her life plans.

Her parents left Myanmar in 1996 as a result of the Burmese government's attack on their village. The Karenni people were one of the victims of the Burmese government's ethnic cleansing. According to Nae Mae, "It was really hard because they had no source of food or shelter, and there were a lot of diseases like Malaria." These difficult conditions almost killed her older sister who was a baby at the time of her family's evacuation. Even after settling into the refugee camp in Thailand, their challenges did not end. The camps got minimal government assistance and funding. Nae

Mae was born in Thailand during the colder months of the year. She lived in the refugee camp for ten years. While describing the camp, she said "there was no electricity at all and we were living in poverty." She also said there was no indoor plumbing. Residents had to walk a long distance to find water for bathing, drinking, cooking, and other necessities. They lived in bamboo houses made by themselves. One of the biggest issues faced by Karenni refugees living in Thai refugee camps is access to work opportunities. Nae Mae said that many people grew their own gardens to avoid having to buy fruits and vegetables. The only government rations were rice and oil. Refugees could not work because they didn't have work identification which led to their continued poverty in the refugee camps.

Another huge issue in the refugee camps is the state of their schools. Mae describes it saying, "Our schools were set up where we had to sit on the ground in a bamboo house, every year they gave us a small notebook and 4 pencils. Our education was not formal at all." They

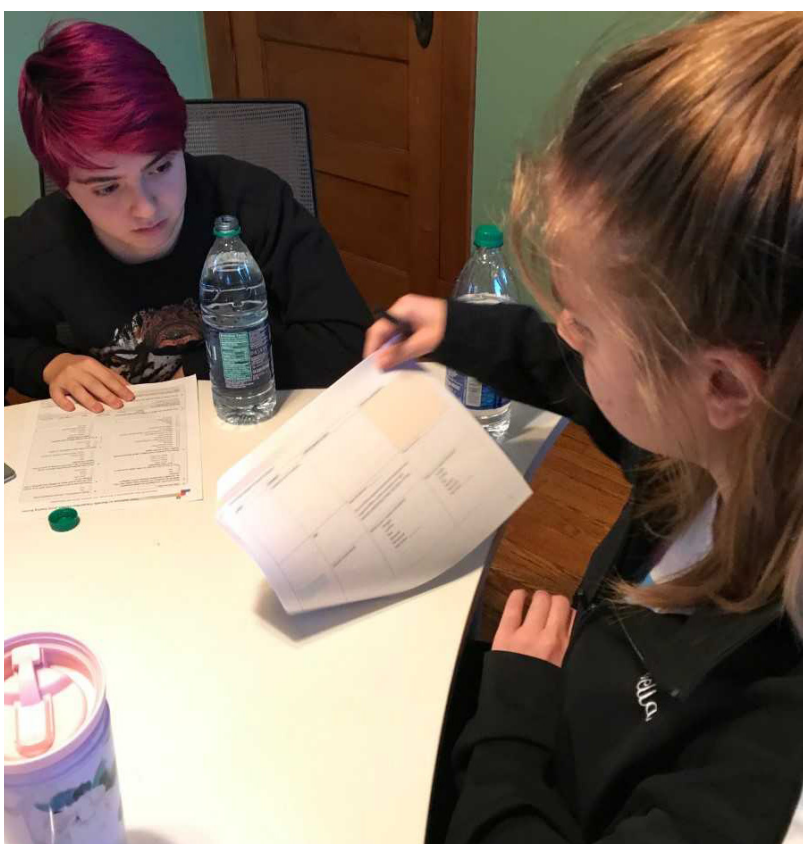
learned Burmese, some basic English, and other classes that weren't as focused on a certain topic. The first time she got what was considered a formal education was when she came to the United States as a third grader. Because of her untraditional education, she was behind the rest of her classmates and had to work hard to catch up.

Nae Mae's experiences in the refugee camp have left a lasting impression on her and her plans for the future. She hopes to one day return to Myanmar and the camps to help her people. She wants to improve access to health facilities. Many people who had health issues had to walk "miles and miles on the way to a clinic." After high school, Mae wants to go to college to become a doctor and get funding to set up health care facilities in her country. She also plans on trying to improve education for the Karenni people, both in refugee camps and in Myanmar. She credits Central's academic rigor for helping her to prepare for college and to accomplish her goals.



Photo Courtesy of **NAE MAE**

**Nae Mae, around age 8, poses with her younger sibling in a refugee camp in Thailand.**



**MOLLY ASHFORD** | The Register

**Elm Quintana, sophomore, and Bella Filips, senior, collaborate on a project for the Women's Fund of Omaha.**

## Five student interns work towards future

**Molly Ashford**  
staff writer

Five teenagers sit around a table in a small office in a Dundee home, two others in a neighboring room. While the larger group of first-year interns research survey methods, the research advisors work on coding past responses. Four of these seven are Central students, including junior Sabina Eastman, senior Bella Filips, and sophomore Elm Quintana.

These students work for the Women's Fund of Omaha as part of a youth participatory internship, analyzing the success of the Adolescent Health Project. This project aims to lower the astronomically high STD rates that plague Omaha, as well as create an inclusive, non-stigmatizing environment in which youth and young adults are encouraged to seek sexual and reproductive health services.

"Mainly, we do research. We

pose a research question as a group and collect data in hopes that what we learn from it can help different communities and can help make services more inclusive", says Filips.

Eastman adds, "Being a research assistant has more to do with reviewing the research and finalizing the data to finalize the data and reach the organizations that we work with."

This is the second year of the youth participatory internship's operation. Last year, the interns conducted research on encouraging and discouraging factors regarding STD testing within youth. This year, they are focusing more on outreach and if it is sufficiently reaching marginalized and underrepresented groups as well as people within the faith community.

There is a consensus among the group that youth voices are often undermined in sexual and reproductive health issues, despite the fact that they are the main group affected by

them. "Adults tend to discredit us but it's important not to give up, it's rare being a teenager whose opinion is actually sought after", said Filips. "I think this internship does an outstanding job of listening to our opinions, while also allowing us to be presented in a way in which we are represented and valued."

"It's very encouraging to know that our work is going to positively affect people," Quintana added.

Each Central intern and RA plans on continuing work within the sexual and reproductive health realm in their future plans. Filips plans on going into gynecology, Quintana would like to continue their work once they move back to Los Angeles this summer, and Eastman plans on continuing on the Adolescent Health Project until she goes off to college.

"We are way more informed than most adults think that we are. We just need the right people to listen to us and that way, things will improve," Filips said.

## Net neutrality will soon affect daily life in schools, at home, at work

**Heidi Heyden**  
staff writer

It impacts our daily lives, but until recent weeks the majority of people worldwide have had no clue that it exists. But now it is being jeopardized, and it may have a huge impact on the one thing we take for granted: the internet. Net Neutrality is, "the internet's guiding principle: It preserves our right to communicate freely online," according to savetheinternet.com. Without net neutrality, our rights to freely use the internet are controlled by the government, and users will have to pay for every single action that they do on the internet, in addition to TV shows and social media.

Earlier this year, the Federal Communications Commission revealed its plan to repeal Net Neutrality on December 14. "It has become evident that the FCC made a mistake," FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said at the Mobil World Congress in Barcelona, Spain, according to CNN.com. Net Neutrality was approved by the FCC in 2015 and was

But in November, it was revealed that Pai would be repeal-

ing Net Neutrality in order to, "end the political uncertainty of internet regulation," according to breitbart.com. To critics, it was seen as a public monopoly and that it would take away the freedom of the internet. On the other hand, supporters claim that Net Neutrality encourages internet equality for all users and prevents anyone to be discriminated for one's internet use. Although the Internet will still exist, the plan to reveal will drastically change the way we use it.

Computers are one of the many tools used here at Central. Websites such as Office365, Turnitin.com, and the Infinite Campus Portal are very widely used by most students. Some-

### anti-net neutrality proposal loading...

65%

previously accessible information may no longer be available

times, it seems as if the internet is the only option for some schoolwork. With the advancement of technology making free, equal internet essential for the best possible education, the repeal of net neutrality may force schools such as Central to pay more for internet access. If the school does not pay for the internet, then students may have to pitch in to keep the

internet alive.

Another possible effect of the repeal of net neutrality at Central is that websites typically available for free and unlimited use would be blocked, which includes both social media apps and essential educational websites (Noodletools, Office365, etc.). Apps such as Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube would be either blocked or highly expensive. The inability for many users to use these apps will not only hurt the companies who created these apps, but life with social media will be severely diminished or end as it is known today. With YouTube just recently being introduced to classrooms, its ability for students to watch videos that will benefit their education will almost be completely wiped out. In order for none of this to occur, students and teachers would have to pay much more money in order to keep the internet free to staff and students.

If people vote to keep Net Neutrality, then the internet will continue to work as it normally would. But if enough people vote to continue with Pai's wish to repeal it, then the interchange. For some people, it will be for the better, as internet providers would be able to control how people use the internet, and it would most likely increase their profit. However, for others it will negatively impact their ability to use the internet as one of the world's biggest sources of information and entertainment today.



# Recent political movement affects everyone, even Central

**Emma Whaley**  
staff writer

Harvey Weinstein. Roy Moore. Matt Lauer. These men and many others have been accused of sexual assault and harassment in the past few months. One Google search and dozens of names appear: Senators, TV hosts, directors, actors and musicians. It appears no person is safe from being accused and no one is safe from being harassed, no matter their field.

While sexual assault and harassment are in the front of Americans' minds in Hollywood and DC, the atmosphere of Central hasn't changed, according to Principal Dr. Ed Bennett.

"The culture in general has always been one that has taken sexual harassment very seriously," Bennett said, "Students have not been afraid to come forward and report that, so we really haven't seen an increase in the numbers of reports."

With the "#MeToo" movement happening on social media and all the accusations coming out of Hollywood and D.C., one might think that accusations would have skyrocketed in the school, but they didn't. Dr. Bennett believes this to be because the culture has always been to report such incidences. He believes the lack of reports and accusations is a good thing.

The administrative team also tries to make Central a safe place with all the new accusations. "I think the fact that we have more girls here than boys ... 53 percent of our student body is female and 47 percent is male ... indicates that girls do feel comfortable here," Bennett said, "We want them to feel comfortable here."

While there are very few reports in the

school, the administration takes them all very seriously.

"We look at the evidence and then we make sure we apply the code [of conduct] as properly as we can," Bennett said. The student code of conduct classifies harassment as "Any physical, verbal, graphic, electronic, or written material, which

includes grabbing and groping as well as explicit and offensive sexual references and gestures. Sexual assault is a level four offense, and, in the case of a valid report, law enforcement will be contacted and there will be mandatory reassignment way from the victim or expulsion, according to the code of conduct.

"We do everything we can to protect the victims,"

how closely the witness stories match." For example, if an incident is reported, administration has the alleged victim write down what happened. Then, is it read and, as part of the incident report, it is asked of that person to list names of other people who have seen it.

"We'll talk to those witnesses and we'll talk to any adults who were there ... and then we put the written accounts together to try to piece together exactly what happened. Based on those facts, we take action. If there's a camera, a security camera, we'll look at that footage too," Bennett said.

With the large number of new allegations against those in powerful positions popping up in the media, many wonder how many allegations turn out to be false. When a report is filed at Central, the administration treats it as just that: a report.

"We trust it, but then we verify it to make sure that it's accurate. So, it's one piece of evidence in a case, but typically it's not the only piece. We need to hear from multiple witnesses to corroborate any particular story ... So, it's not innocent until proven guilty, guilty until proven innocent. It's a piece of the puzzle," Bennett said.

While it may be a frightening time for young women everywhere, Central strives to remain a place of professional and appropriate scholarship. "Our goal continues to be that every student who comes here ... they have a right to get a free and appropriate public education. They have the right to be safe here and to not be violated in any way, to not be physically harmed in any way, to feel comfortable with peers and have an experience here that is free of any sort of sexual harassment."

# #MeToo

is related to a person's disability, gender, race, color ... which has the purpose of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment," and regards it as a level 3 of-

Bennett said, "We try to be as reassuring as we can and as supportive as we can ... Most cases that we investigate take two to three days, probably, to figure out. It all depends on

## Longtime biology teacher focuses on positive relationships with students

**Grace Turner**  
staff writer

Tracy Rumbaugh, AP biology and honors biology teacher, is currently the teacher who has taught AP Biology for the longest time in the Omaha Public Schools district. Even though she has only been a teacher at Central for five, and only taught AP biology for four, there are no other teachers who have been teaching the class for longer.

There are many reasons why students take AP biology. One of the main reasons students take the course is to gain college credit through either taking the AP test at the end of the year or signing up for dual enrollment through University of Nebraska-Omaha. Other students may take the class to build a college resume, explore biology-based career options, or to gain experience in an AP class, which will help them prepare for college.

One of Rumbaugh's favorite parts of teaching AP biology is being able to have the same students in her class multiple times. As an honors biology teacher, she teaches many students their freshman and sophomore year, and then teaches them later in the AP course. Additionally, she worked at a middle school previous to her teaching at Central, meaning she has had some students in middle school, honors biology and AP biology classes. Rumbaugh said, "One of my favorite parts of teaching AP Biology and about teaching high school in general is having repeat students and having the opportunity to see kids in the building for four years, and to see students graduate and move on to their next step in life."

Every year Rumbaugh has taught AP biology the way she has taught the class changes. This is due to the experience she has gained while teaching the class in previous years. She feels it is important to change the way she teaches the class in order to help her students learn more

and better understand the concepts that are being taught. By trying new ideas and lessons each year she is learning how to teach the class better and what works better for different students.

Rumbaugh said, "Some things I have tried have not worked so each year I try to replace those things with something more engaging. I have been told by long time AP teachers that it takes 5 years to get the class where you want it and I feel like this is holding true for me. However, I also do not want and will not allow the class to become stagnant just because I've hit this 5-year milestone. I want it to always be changing."

There are other struggles in teaching AP Bio that Rumbaugh faces. One of the main struggles that she has is time. Many of the students taking her class are also participating in clubs, sports, jobs, out of school activities and other extra curriculars, so sometimes it can be difficult for students to dedicate the time to reading the book and studying chapters outside of class. This becomes a struggle because there is a lot of material in the AP biology book, and therefore without using out of class time it can be difficult to get through all of the material.

While teaching AP Biology, Rumbaugh has learned a lot. She believes that through teaching this course she has learned more about the importance of community while teaching a class, and that sometimes teaching is not all about instructing students on what they need to know in the lesson or for the test. Rumbaugh said, "I've learned that students may not remember everything you taught them, but they will remember how you made them feel. The AP curriculum is huge. It is a lot to take on for both the teacher and the student. I've learned from this class, more than any other that I have taught, the importance of community in education."



ALEXIS BLANKENFELD | The Register

Tracy Rumbaugh has been teaching biology for four years.





TOP LEFT: Junior Lydia Baum.

TOP RIGHT: Junior Bria Gilmore and junior Henry Wisneski

BOTTOM LEFT: Members of Improv 88 demonstrate their skills.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Senior Romyn Petersen, senior Riley Kessler, junior Trinity Freeman Hogan

DILLON GALLOWAY | The O-Book

## Local acting group performed at second annual improv night

**Javier Lepes**  
staff writer

The Central High Drama department held an Improv Night on Dec. 7. Located in the auditorium, it was the 2nd annual improv night for the drama department. Students from the Honors Drama class, Improv Team, and the Omaha Improv group, Improv 88, all participated in Improv night.

With more than 20 Central High students and the members of Improv 88, they'll be performing Improv games for the audience to enjoy. At moments the audience may also join the

Improv performers to participate in Improv games, audience participation is strongly encouraged.

Improv night is open for all ages and people as there is no entry fee but there is also a suggested two dollars donation at the auditorium entrance that will go towards the Central Drama Department. These donations will help the Drama Department in many ways to further enhance the experience for students and the audience in future Drama activities and productions.

Improv 88 an Improv group that consists of four members has been together since 2003 and are locally based here in

Omaha, but can be seen performing throughout the Midwest. Oftentimes you can see Improv 88 performing at The Backline Comedy theatre here in Omaha. Improv 88's main mission is to make Improv better by performing long form and short form Improv.

"It's going to be a fun night, everyone should look forward to fun and laughs and we hope to see many people there," Henry Wisneski, who is a part of the Honors drama class, said before the show. As said in the Improv Night Flyer "If you love comedy, Improv, acting or the show 'Whose Line is it Anyway'...this is the place to be."

## Three major candidates set to run in upcoming congressional election

**Malcolm Durfee O'Brien**  
staff writer

The 2018 midterm election in the Nebraska Second Congressional District is expected to be one of the few competitive races in the country. So, who is running for Congress? Polling and fundraising data has shown three strong candidates, one Republican and two Democrats.

The first major candidate is Brad Ashford, who has decided to run for a second term competing against the man who narrowly beat him in 2016. Ashford previously served as Congressman between 2015 and 2017; in addition, he served as a longtime state Senator and government official, most notably as Chief Executive of the Omaha Housing Authority.

His campaign has already received major endorsements, most significantly the centrist New Democrats and the Blue Dog Democrats. In what is already expected to be a tough year for Republicans, a recent poll has shown Ashford leading Bacon at 49 percent while

Bacon is at 40 percent, however, according to Ashford Campaign Manager Jim Rogers, "Elections are never easy and we will be running as if we are 10 points down." He also stated that, "Congressman Bacon has repeatedly shown that he is out of touch with the Second Congressional District and his voting patterns on issues around healthcare and taxes are proving to be wildly unpopular with voters here," in reference to his votes in favor of both the repeal of Obamacare and the recent Republican tax reform bill.

Ashford will also be running against non-profit executive Kara Eastman in the primary, his first ever major primary opponent. Rogers said that the reason Democrats should support Ashford over Eastman is that, "Representative Ashford has a history of working with people across the spectrum of our community to solve issues. Ashford will continue to be a proven leader within our community who will work tirelessly to ensure that we are moving forward in a collaborative, accepting, and effective manner," echoing the message Ashford had in his 2016 campaign.

In respect to how he views the difficulty of the upcoming campaign against Eastman, and potentially Ashford, Rogers said, "Campaigns are always competitive and we will be running a campaign that is aggressive in reaching our goals of financing, media, and voter contact no matter who our opponents are in this election." The Ashford campaign has raised roughly \$125,000 and spent roughly \$23,000 of that.

The second major candidate is Don Bacon. Bacon defeated Ashford in 2016 by roughly one percentage point and will be the incumbent in the 2018 election. Prior to his political run, Bacon worked on the staff of Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, taught at Bellevue University and served in the Air Force as a Brigadier General.

The Bacon campaign is confident, despite polls indicating a bad year for Republican incumbents, that 2018 will be a relatively easy race to win. According to the Bacon Campaign's Director of Communication Kyle

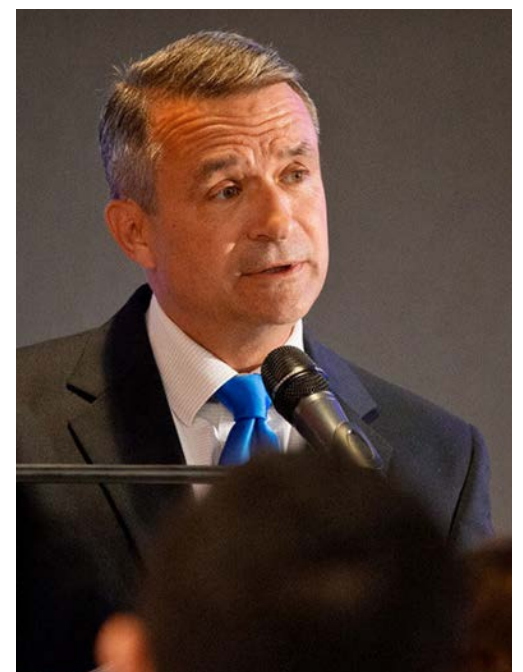


Photo Courtesy of NE.GOP  
Current Congressman Don Bacon (R) defeated Brad Ashford in 2016 by a slight margin.

**ELECTION** on page 7



# Salaries are point of contention among administration, teachers

**Alec Rome**  
staff writer

Money: a subject that can bring people to the polling places, particularly when it comes to salaries and spending in education. Superintendent Mark Evans' salary normally makes it into media coverage, but how that compares to teachers and other administrators can be overlooked.

It can look as if Mark Evans' salary for the 2017-2018 school year is too much (his pay after his contract extension is \$295,569). Comparatively, that is only a small sliver of the \$11,231,531 spent in the budget on what the district labels as "Executive Administrative Services" and "Board of Education Costs."

13 of the top 20 salaries in OPS belong to those at TAC, according to the Omaha World-Herald's public employee database. The other seven salaries belong to building principals, and includes Central's Dr. Ed Bennett, who made a gross salary of \$131,242 during 2016.

Charles Wakefield, Chief Human Resources Officer for OPS, believes that while this sounds like a large sum toward administration, it is justified. "As with any large organization there is a level of central administration needed as this provides efficiencies that would be lost otherwise," Wakefield said. "In spite of this, we spend less than two percent of our total budget on central office administration. The money spent at this level provides the support services that allow building administration to focus on students." In relation to the entire 2016-17 budget, TAC administration accounts for 1.8 percent of a \$608 million spent.

In July, two more Executive Director positions were added to be liaisons

and coaches for building principals across the district. This brought with it some doubts from the public about adding another layer of administration. Wakefield believes that those positions have proven to be more beneficial than the previous system of a direct line between the superintendent and building principals. "The role of the Executive Director position is much more than a coach," Wakefield said.

"This position supports and supervises building leaders in a variety of ways both increasing accountability and support. Both national research and our own local experience show this model to be not only effective but a best practice in supporting student performance." The funding for these six-figure positions came from eliminated positions at TAC, which meant that the addition of those jobs did not bring any supplemental spending in executive administration.

The total impact financially of central administration salaries on the district is not entirely significant. A much larger question is how the roles of an administrator who may work in a more general sense with large numbers of students and staff compare to a teacher that works with students in a specialized way. The average salary per full-time employee for

school administration under the district budget is \$60,000, compared to \$53,000 for normal ten-month teachers.

How is the differentiation made between who makes more money? It starts at the negotiation table. The Omaha Educators Association negotiates a "master agreement" between the teachers and the district every three school years. The next time they are scheduled to negotiate

tration.

Other factors that determine a teacher's salary are external teaching experience, seniority and time in the district and level of postgraduate experience. Teachers can also earn additional compensation for having a "leadership position" such as a department head or curriculum specialist. In the master agreement, there are "steps" that determine a teacher's base salary based on years in the district and level of education, and how much a salary would increase based on the aforementioned factors.

At first glance, this brings up another possible point of contention. The difference between a teacher that has a bachelor's degree and one that has a master's degree is around four thousand dollars. OPS does give teachers opportunities to earn a master's degree through grants. "Typically, the pay increase given for this over the lifetime of the teacher easily covers the costs of the additional education," Wakefield said. "Many teachers, however, return for advanced degree as this is a way for teachers to further grow in and master their craft. Educators in general see continuing education and [lifelong learning] as important and many of us live this as we continue to learn and grow."

Overall, the district negotiates salaries and attempts to compare positions and responsibilities to determine why a teacher with tenure may earn less than a new assistant principal to the district. It is simply all relative to the school and the unique roles that come with each building and each job description.



salary is in 2018. "We use a comparability process to help determine compensation and benefits for staff," Wakefield said. "In this process, we compare like positions in other districts that are similar in size, geographic region and make up to OPS."

Administrators end up making more money compared to teachers because of increased responsibilities, Wakefield said. "The level of responsibility does increase significantly as an educator moves into administration and not every teacher chooses this path. Administrative positions have a larger scope and greater responsibilities. Administrator salaries represent this as well as the additional days/time that an administrator would work." He also stated that in talking with teachers, most choose to remain in the classroom for the rest of their career instead of choosing the path of adminis-

## Q & A

With Matt Tompkins, the creator and producer of the post SNL program Omaha Live!

**Kaitlyn Engel**  
staff writer

After Saturday Night Live, most people fall asleep. But for those who stay awake with their television on find themselves entranced by a weird, quirky sketch show that somehow encapsulates their life in Nebraska. Omaha Live! creates sketches that apply almost exclusively to the Nebraska experience. Created by Matt and Ben Tompkins in 2011, Omaha Live! has thrived through six seasons while managing to keep its sketches new and exciting. Creator and producer Matt Tompkins explains the origins and process of producing Omaha Live! every week.

**Q: How long have you worked in broadcasting?**

**Matt Tompkins:** I started in December 2004 when I started my internship for Clear Channel Radio (now it's iHeartMedia) and that was for a station called KFAB (which is an AM talk station) and I interned for three months before I got hired. Then I was promoted to producing the afternoon show for KFAB for about two years. Then in 2007 I started working with visual productions. Around that time my brother [Ben Tompkins] had gotten out of college. We were in the process of pitching a Sunday morning variety show, but then the afternoon guy got laid off, so we got put on that and created the Matt and Ben Show which we did for a little over four years. [After that] I got the opportunity to a syndicated radio show on Sirius XM with Otis Twelve.

**What was the inspiration behind Omaha Live!?**

**Matt:** Saturday Night Live is every comedian's, every entertainer's dream. It's the dream gig. But percentages are against you getting on Saturday Night Live. And so that was always the dream of mine (like everybody else). I never took the leap when I was younger and moved away to the big city and did it. I would call it fate that led me stumbling into these opportunities that led me into radio and I felt that radio and T.V. functioned as my creative

outlet, and if I had that I'd be content.

When we had the opportunity to make a T.V., [Ben and I] had made funny YouTube videos, we had built up the video production equipment we needed to make the show, but it was something so different, such a cool opportunity to do like if we could pull this off, with a minimal budget, with no studio, no actors (when we started). We just kind of built it to where it [is] today. You pull inspiration of Saturday Night Live, we pull from Flight of the Conchords (a musical comedy show), we pull from Adult Swim, which just opened the doors to being goofy and weird and a lot of our show (especially in the first season) was really goofy, really weird. We were very tongue and cheek like we know that were a low-budget local show with a wink and a nod. Our biggest inspiration was that if we can pull this off, if we can do this, let's do something nobody else has done before.

**How did Omaha Live! begin?**

**Matt:** [After] I left completely and was on my own, and I built a studio at my house. I was still working part time at KFAB. [But] we are working on the details of doing this T.V. show. Vic Richards was the promotions director when we did a pilot of the T.V. Show called Live Omaha! which is where the Omaha Live comes from. When [Richards] became general manager, he thought "well let's take a chance on this idea". So, a year and half later we started doing the T.V. show, and the rest is history.

**Q: What is your process for creating in the show?**

**Matt:** When we started [with the T.V. show] we were lucky because Ben and I had literally thousands of skits to choose from. We had comedy albums. We were very lucky that we were not pulling from scratch. Now, our ideas come from a lot of different places. For me, stuff just kind of happens to me just during any point of the day.

All of our sketches start with an idea. Then we have a writers' meeting where we pitch the idea, and we basically flush it out and we put together a beat sheet [a

plot diagram]. Between that, you fill in the dialogue that structures your sketch. At the next writers' meeting, you read the sketch aloud and make sure it is good.

Then, we do a final review of it. Eventually, it's cast, we schedule it and we go out and film it. We go through a shot list, preplanning, and then it's filmed. I then do all the editing at home. It sits on my computer for a week to a month, and then once it's edited it's done. The process can be quicker than that, but most of the time we like to take a nice, long process, at least a week or two before it goes on the air to truly flush it out.

**Who are your viewers?**

**Matt:** With a new rating system, we found that one, there are a lot more people watching than we thought, and two that it's a much younger audience than we had thought. But there is also a spike in older people and it's because those are the people who can't leave the house. High school kids, college kids in dorms, that's your younger demographic, and also senior citizens in their homes. A lot of people have stumbled upon it, and now DVR it. We definitely have a wide variety of viewers. When we had our premiere we had young people, college aged people, middle aged people, family people, and old people. I think when you're doing a kind of weird, off center type of comedy, you attract all kinds of people.

What keeps the viewer coming back for more?

I think most people who watch it, the first time they see this they think what the h\*\*\* am I watching? It says its Omaha Live!, but it says it has a 48-hour delay (whatever that means). It's obviously a local show. But most people tend to get into it. After a while, it's like this cat with three legs, it's an odd thing that your kind of like but don't want it to leave. It's very different and quirky. Eventually we catch them with a bit that they do like. Your [goal] as a show is that you want every bit to be funny, but really, you want people to remember and like the show. If you can make them laugh off the bat, that's what keeps them with you.

Omaha Live! airs after Saturday Night Live at midnight on WOWT.





Photo Courtesy of BRADASHFORDFORCONGRESS.COM



Photo Courtesy of DOUGLASCOUNTYDEMOCRATS.COM

Candidates Brad Ashford and Kara Eastman will compete for the Democratic nomination to run against Don Bacon. This is Eastman's first time running for public office.

## Too early to name a frontrunner in 2018 Congressional race

**ELECTION** from page 5

Clark, "Don Bacon has earned very strong support in this district" and that in 2016 "The voters made their opinions clear, and Don is committed to staying true to the principles and ideals that earned their votes."

The Campaign, represented by Clark, also showed a lack of concern in the recent poll showing Bacon trailing Ashford by 9 percentage points saying that, "This poll was conducted by a Democrat-aligned pollster," and that, "we are not concerned about the biased and unrealistic results of this poll." The poll was indeed conducted by the Democratic-owned Public Policy Polling. The Bacon campaign has a large lead in fundraising over both Democratic candidates, having raised roughly \$750,000

over Ashford's \$125,000 and Eastman's \$105,000 as of the third quarter of 2017, according to opensecrets.org.

The third and final major candidate is Kara Eastman. Eastman is a nonprofit executive of Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance and is Vice Chair of the Metropolitan Community College Board of Governors. Currently, the Eastman campaign is focusing on increasing name recognition. The campaign has spent \$52,000 of the \$105,000 raised. They have also had a major focus on canvassing.

According to Development Associate and Central senior Nick Koehler, they have found 65% of Democrats in support of Eastman and 33% undecided, though he himself admitted this is likely due in part to confirmation bias. "Ashford doesn't believe in canvassing, he has

his staff do that and having Eastman, the candidate, actually visit houses while campaigning, people remember that," Koehler said. One of the major things Koehler emphasized was his distrust in Ashford's record saying, "He voted against DACA. He voted against Obamacare three times before voting yes. He, while in the state senate, voted for parental notification. He was in favor of the Keystone XL pipeline, now he's against it, he flip-flopped on that too."

The primary focus of the Eastman campaign is on the flip flopping of Brad Ashford on the positions and on the goal of nominating, in Koehler's words, "a true progressive." Koehler admitted that, right now, the campaign is an uphill battle to get Eastman's name out.



# GREEK ISLANDS

3821 CENTER ST.



# Two students utilize business skills to help those in need

DECA from page 1

boo-gram. This made more of the administration and student body aware of the hard work both Johnson and Gilmore have dedicated to "Soaring with Hope."

According to Gilmore and Johnson, their greatest challenge has been raising more awareness and following through with their promise to their fellow students. They wanted to truly engage in what is the heart of DECA: the community oriented aspect. "We just need more people to get the word out so people can see what we're about and the things we are going to," Gilmore said.

"The Hope Center is in Omaha and in Fremont, so we really wanted to focus on a [local] organization rather than an organization that's all around the country, so we can help build up our community," Johnson and Gilmore stated.

Neither student could have carried out the project as well as they have without one another. They have a genuine respect towards their partnership and value the skills they individually bring to the table

to collaborate. "Kincaid has a lot strength in organization, creative ideas and getting things started. I really appreciate that," Gilmore said. Partnership has led them to great success and they look forward to progressing into senior year. "Bria is really good at getting everyone involved and making sure everyone is following that path. She is very responsible and keeps motivating us even if we're going through a rough patch," Johnson said.

Hope Week is rapidly approaching. Hope week is where the girls try and get businesses and churches involved to ask their congregation or customers to give to their cause for an entire week. Whether it is less than a dollar, only a dollar or more, all is appreciated. As of late, they have raised over \$800 dollars.

As Johnson and Gilmore further dedicate their time and effort to the Hope Center, as seniors, the girls plan to learn from their mistakes this time around and continue to complete volunteer projects while simultaneously gaining hands-on experiences.



Photo Courtesy of BRIA GILMORE

Kincaid Johnson and Bria Gilmore, both juniors, raise money at a football game for their project.



MOLLY ASHFORD | The Register

A student takes the time to pray in the new prayer room 7th hour.

# Prayer room offers safe place for students

ROOM from page 1

which isn't required but most prefer it since it's a cleaner space," Rab explained. "We put our prayer mats facing Mecca and pray for about ten to fifteen minutes, and then head back to class. All teachers have been very understanding of it, but most of us

just go during lunch."

Rab expressed her gratefulness to go to a school like Central where a program like this is possible and accepted by both the staff and the student body. It is a simple request to accommodate space to worship for students of any religion, but in some professional spaces, this gets over-

shadowed by non-accepting colleagues or higher-ups.

In a time of increasing and unfairly attributed islamophobia, the inclusivity of Central's prayer room offers hope that there is a safe place for Muslim students to practice their freedom of religion.

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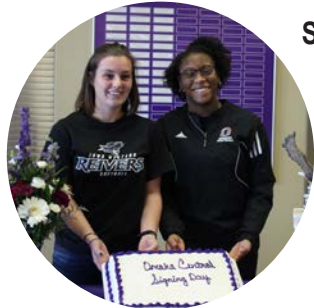
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### Seniors commit to metro area colleges

Two student athletes commit to two different institutions to continue their education and improve their athletic abilities.

PAGE 10

### Unified Bowling club blends different students

For the first time, Central has a unified bowling team. There are students who are intellectually disabled mixed with students in a regular classroom. Team members are dedicated to practice once a week and games as they decide.

PAGE 11



### Boys basketball upcoming season preview

With a new head coach and only 3 returning players, the 2017-2018 basketball season is sure to be an entertaining one.

PAGE 13

# sports & leisure

THE REGISTER

Vol. 133 No. 3 | December 14, 2017



ALEC ROME | The Register

Controversy and talk circulated this year's football season after Jay Ball's departure with comments from numerous players and fans criticizing the current state of the varsity football program.

## HEAD COACH OUSTED

After Central's first win-less season since 1975, head coach Lance Griffin parted ways with CHS athletics.

**Alec Rome**  
staff writer

The Eagles are looking for new leadership in the football program after a win-less season.

Coach Lance Griffin, who took over for Jay Ball after his retirement from OPS, agreed to part ways from the Central football program in November. Griffin was an assistant under Ball and a Central alumnus. During his one season as head coach, the Eagles posted an 0-9 record, which was the first winless season for the program since

1975.

Athletic director Luke Dillon confirmed the decision at the beginning of November. While he did not specifically comment on the details of Griffin's departure, he did note some general trends during the season. "Sometimes I think in life or in general you start heading one direction and when your viewpoints don't necessarily align with others, you agree to disagree," Dillon said. "In order to have a climate and culture that is going to be suitable for the kids to be successful, we all have to be on the same page."

Griffin was the head coach at Concordia

High before taking the Central head coaching job. Dillon believes that he did what he could to create an atmosphere of success. "I think he was trying to do the best he could do to what he knew and how he went about business," Dillon said. "Some things can work at certain schools but maybe at certain schools or certain time periods they don't. Perhaps at Central things just didn't work out."

This change in direction had to be communicated to parents, a group that Dillon kept in constant communication with for feedback. He did not tell parents

exactly why he chose to move forward with a different coach, but he does take feedback into account. "Most of my decisions and the terminations I make are based off the feedback I get from students, parents and what I observe at practices," Dillon said. "I'm trying to get a lot of input from parents and kids to see exactly what they are looking for in the next head coach." He said that a lot of people are giving him names of potential candidates, but he is not interested in that. Dillon wants to know what attributes would make the perfect coach and what makes

**GRIFFIN** on page 14

## Termination of Neb. football coach effective, high stakes for future

**Ari Saltzman**  
staff writer

On Nov. 25, Nebraska Athletic Director Bill Moos announced the termination of Mike Riley's contract. Effectively firing him as the head coach at the University of Nebraska. This was the right move, and the move Nebraska needed to make.

As soon as former Athletic Director Sean Eichorst hired Riley many questioned whether Eichorst made the correct hire. In Riley's first year, Nebraska lost 5 of their first 8 games by a total of 13 points, 4 of them on their opponents' final offensive play. The Huskers would then go on to finish 6-7 with a bowl victory over UCLA.

Riley brought in an impressive recruiting class, and the Huskers had tons of momentum heading into the 2016 season in late July. But, that is when the unthinkable happened, senior punter Sam Foltz, was killed in a car

**Nebraska needed to get rid of Mike Riley...it is time for a change.**

crash. Nebraska was able to rally around him and begin the 2016 season 7-0 and bring a #7 ranking into Camp Randall Stadium for a showdown with the #11 Badgers.

The high point and beginning of the end of the Riley

era all occurred in that game. Mike Riley's squad had multiple chances to win the game late, but Wisconsin escaped 23-17 in overtime. Nebraska then lost 62-3 to Ohio State and losses of 40-10 and 38-24 to Iowa and Tennessee respectively to close the year. The Huskers then fired defensive coordinator Mark Banker, and brought in Bob Diaco. After a good signing day, everything pointed to a make it or break year for Riley in year 3.

Year 3 ended up being a complete disaster from opening night, barely surviving Arkansas State. A close loss at Oregon and it looked like Nebraska might finally be going in the right direction. That all ended with the embarrassing 21-17 loss to Northern Illinois. 5 days later Eichorst

**NEBRASKA** on page 14



# Senior softball players recruited by two metro area colleges

## COURTNEY YOUNG

University of Nebraska-Omaha

Javier Lepes  
staff writer

Signing day is a big day and an accomplishment not many athletes get to experience. It is an even bigger accomplishment signing to a division one sports program. Less than two percent of high school athletes end up playing a division one sport in college. Senior Courtney Young is a part of that two percent.

She started out playing softball at age nine because she “wanted to try it.” After watching her sister play softball through part of her life, she decided to join a soft-

ball team and since then has had dreams to play at the college level. Young was offered a scholarship from the University of Nebraska Omaha last summer to play softball.

Signing day ended up being a memorable experience for Young. “It was exciting, my family, friends, and teammates all came to my signing day. My teammate Logon Brown also signed that day and it made the day more comfortable for me.”

She was given an invitation to the UNO campus by the head and assistant coaches at the end of a camp she was attending. They asked her the question if she

wanted to play softball at UNO during her campus visit.

Young accepted the offer; she was looking into becoming an engineering and to play softball at the next competitive level and UNO suited her. Young enjoys both the softball and academic programs at UNO. “The program hired a new softball coach last year, so I expect things to be pretty great for the program.”

The multi athlete has worked for most of her life to get to the position she is currently in. “I don’t like to show weakness, I’ll always push through pain no matter what.” Her first year of select softball

influenced her a lot. Without her many coaches and dad that has played a big role in her life she feels she wouldn’t be in the same position. “My dad has put in so much work and time to help me with my sports.”

With her goals high, she plans to do well in college. “I know college will be hard, but I don’t expect anything to be too hard for me. I’m ready for all the challenges academics and softball will give me. I want to be able to adjust quickly as fast as I can to college softball and academically I plan to do really well.”

## LOGON BROWN

Iowa Western Community College

Anna Kaminski  
editor-in-chief

Senior Logon Brown committed to Iowa Western Community College this past week to continue her softball and academic career.

She has been playing softball for over ten years and throughout high school, she lettered all four years. Her freshman year, the starting varsity catcher was injured, and Brown happened to be in the right place at the right time, moving up to the varsity level at just 14 years old.

In her search to continue her softball career, Brown admitted that she was a little behind. By the time she decided that she wanted to stick with softball, all of the rosters at four-year universities were full. She turned to one of her coaches who recommended that she try a community college because Brown would still be able to be recruited by a university.

“Wherever softball takes me is where I will try to adapt to,” Brown said. That being said, Iowa Western has a reputable athletic program where Brown can gain experience and prepare for next year’s season.

Brown first became interested in softball at seven years old when she quit soccer, “I didn’t like kicking people. I didn’t

want to be mean,” she said. Her dad wanted her to keep playing a sport and Brown reluctantly agreed to softball just to get her dad to stop pestering her.

As Brown grew older, she became better and better at the sport. She made a select team in middle school and expanded her skillset by playing a wide variety of positions. “Softball has always been a savior for me,” Brown said. In times where life wasn’t so simple for her or her family, “softball was the one thing that got us all through and brought us together. It was kind of like a glue for us at that time, but it turned into ‘hey, I love this, I want to keep doing this,’” Brown said.

Her sophomore year of high school, Brown underwent her fair share of hardship, and softball happened to be her support system. Rather than putting her energy into things that brought her down, she focused on bettering herself and managing her time. “My whole world came crashing down, in a sense, and I built it back up with something that is promising for my future,” Brown said.

As of this year, Brown recalls that the season was slightly challenging. A coaching change occurred and many of the starting players on varsity graduated in 2017. “This year wasn’t about winning...we tried to have fun with it and let things flow,” Brown said.

Brown says that this school year has been relaxed. She has kept up her grades, works 25 hours a week and practices softball almost every night. Though this may seem like a heavy load, Brown has learned to manage her time and she has acquired a keen sense of focus and self-discipline.

Brown cites her parents and Coach Neel as inspirations for her. They have watched her grow and evolve as a person and a player. Brown said her dad has always been one to tell her the truth – whether she wants to hear it or not – and her mom has always encouraged her to pursue her wildest dreams.

Acceptance and culture are values that Brown keeps close to her heart. She wants to study international business and travel the world. “I want to travel because it will allow me to experience,” Brown said. “I want to get rid of the uncomfortable around the things that I don’t know.”

Brown’s father taught her that it’s important to be involved in something that is bigger than the self, something that people can put their energy into. For Brown, it is softball. “You definitely have to love what you do,” Brown said, “Because if you don’t, you’re not going to put in that extra time that you need to surpass other people...If you don’t put in that extra time, you’re not going to get the results that you want.”

TOP: Softball player Courtney Young officially commits to continue her educational and athletic career at the University of Omaha-Nebraska.

BOTTOM LEFT: Logon Brown, also a softball player, signs to play at Iowa Western Community College at the time being.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Teammates Young and Brown pose with their celebratory cake.

MADISON THARNISH | The O-Book







MAC O'BRIEN | The Register

Students in special education classes and regular classes formed a bowling team in order to improve their game and embrace the diversity within Central's community.

## Unified bowling team merges fun with social skills

Mac O'Brien  
staff writer

This year, for the first time in the school's history, Central has a unified bowling team. The team is coached by Kevin Drwal and Gerald Kreber. Kevin Drwal, a coach of the team and Business Management teacher described it as, "A mix between students who have intellectual disabilities and students in a regular classroom setting." Drwal said that Ashley Barna, the Dean of Students, was responsible for the creation of the team.

"I've been volunteering for the Special Olympics for years," Drwal said, "[Barna] asked if I was interested and I jumped at the chance right away."

According to Drwal, the recent growth of unified sports has been encouraged by the Special Olympics, which he described as the "parent" of unified sports.

"I think it's going to grow into more and more sports, because there are a lot of unified teams that aren't school-sponsored that are starting to be school-sponsored. This is our second sport already."

Drwal said that he and the other coaches would push for more unified sports at Central, specifically mentioning the possibility of a golf team.

According to Drwal, both the students with disabilities, called the "athletes," and the other students, called the "partners," benefit from the team.

"For [the athletes] it's more of a social aspect, to get them involved, get them to talk more, be more outgoing and then meet new people," Drwal said. "For them it's huge."

"For the general students, they learn more about empathy and teaching and things like that."

Junior Grace Nodes, partner on the team, said that she values the opportunity to get to know the other students, and shares in their excitement when their hard work pays off.

"Most of them have never bowled before, so they get really frustrated when they don't get the pins, but they just keep trying over and over again," Nodes said.

She also said, since it is their first year, the team is primarily focused on having fun and improvement rather than competition.

"We don't take it too seriously, it's kind of just for fun and a volunteer thing," Nodes said.

The team has one practice a week, held at a bowling alley in the Immaculate Conception Church, and one match a week, usually held at Leopard Lanes.

"Tuesdays and Thursdays are our bowling days, so if we don't have a match then we practice," Nodes said.

Nodes said that she would join the team if it was available next year, and that she definitely recommends it to others, though the team must have an equal number of athletes and partners. Drwal also reflects positively on the experience.

"[The experience has been] very, very good and positive," Drwal said. "Everyone has fun doing it, me and coach Kreber have had a blast coaching everyone, special needs students love it, and general students have also really been enjoying it. Everybody looks forward to practice, and looks forward to the meets every time. Turns out we're pretty good."

## Top eight reasons why everyone should be a runner

I am a runner. I run 5-6 times a week and enjoy it immensely. I have joined Cross Country and Track. Every day when I get home from a run I feel accomplished, relaxed, and ready to take on the rest of the day. I believe everyone should at least try running, because it is a very simple way to be active, healthier, and happier.

### 1. Most accessible sport

Running is one of the most readily available activities anyone can do. For other sports such as basketball, swimming, or soccer they require a lot of equipment and space. Running on the other hand, with shoes being the only needed accessory, is a cheap and easy sport for anyone to do. All you have to do is put shoes on and start running.

### 2. Keeps people healthy

Running has been proven by many studies to help keep people healthy and live longer. The American Heart Association recommends running to

lower blood pressure and cholesterol. It is also proven to, on an average, add three years to your life, even running



SYDNEY PRESCOTT  
RUN 'N READ

slow for five minutes. Finally, running (or any other physical activity) lowers risk for 13 out of 26 cancers researched.

### 3. Developing endurance and speed

By continuing to run often, it will

develop endurance and speed. This means that the hundreds of stairs at Central would be less exhausting, running in a race would be possible, and be faster than 50 percent of the population.

### 4. Feeling better

Running has been proven to lift people's mood, as exercise releases endorphins (relieves pain and stress), dopamine (motivation), and serotonin (boosts mood). This results in a very relaxing run and an less stressful day afterwards.

### 5. Sleeping better

According to sleep.org, as little as ten minutes of exercise can help people fall asleep faster and stay asleep just bit longer.

### 6. Purpose

Running gives people goals. It could be to run just a bit farther each time, or to be able run a 5K by next month. Whatever it is, it helps you practice

goal setting and then each workout gives you a feeling of accomplishment. "I am done. I feel good," is a very common saying in cross country.

### 7. Getting to eat more food

Naturally, exercising means that you need more calories to sustain living, breathing, and growing. So therefore, running gives you an excuse to eat more.

### 8. Productiveness

By exercising during the day, people had more concentration, needed less breaks, and finished their work on time more often than when they wouldn't exercise. Running also produces more brain-derived neurotrophic factor, which stimulates better memory in your brain.

All in all, running has many benefits, both on the outside body and the mind. So give running a try.



Photo Courtesy of **MARISA PEREZ**

Marisa Perez is a key component of Central's attack up front. During the winter, she hones her skills playing indoor club soccer. She is known for being feisty and hustling to the ball.

**ANNA KAMINSKI** | The Register

## Tri-athlete overcomes obstacles, enjoys meeting new people

**Lizbeth Hermosillo-Najar**  
staff writer

Between being at school for seven hours and having to study countless hours is a lot for any teenager. Staying another four sweat-stained hours after school and having a normal teenage social life it can become quite difficult. Being a triathlete is tough, but not impossible.

Marisa Perez a 17-year-old junior is a triathlete. Perez plays golf in the fall, basketball in the winter and soccer in the spring. She started playing golf in high school originally because her mother wanted her to play a sport for the fall as well as other family

members encouraging her to play. She's been on varsity soccer for three years and started varsity basketball this year.

Perez has been playing soccer since the age of four and continued because she enjoyed the sport and was good at playing it. After high school Perez would like to go to a university and play soccer there as well. She would like to go into the medical field and become a surgeon.

"Being a triathlete has its pros and cons," Perez said. Meeting new people who she would've probably never have met if she wasn't in those sports and the atmosphere of being involved into those sports and being recognized as the few people at Central who

are triathletes are all rewarding to her.

"Some of the difficulties that come with being a triathlete for me is time management," she said. Social life, her club soccer team and being able to keep track of her academics especially because of the many honors classes she's in all add to the difficulties."

"When I'm finishing up a 5:30-7:30 practice on a Friday night, my friends are out doing things and I'm ready to go home and go to bed, as for my academics by the end of the day after being at school for seven hours the laziness kicks in."

"It's all worth it, it helps me stay on track and will pay off in the future," she said.

Education is very important to Perez; it's essential for her success in order to be where she wants to be in life and become a surgeon. Her mother always made it a point to place education over everything and valued it so highly it was only right to do so.

Perez defies all obstacles in front of her and continues to keep going. If one day Perez were unable to play sports she would still have all her knowledge to fall back on and she's proud to be able to say that. She just not another player on the field, she's a leader in aspects of her life.

## Weighing oneself during powerlifting season is essential

**Anne Gallagher**  
staff writer

As a powerlifter, being lifted into the right weight class determines how well you will do and who you compete against. Each person is put into a weight category that covers a range of around 10 pounds. Some athletes alter their diets to lose weight so that they can lift weights with people of lower muscle masses. This is often called "cutting weight" and is common throughout the powerlifting season, although coaches may not approve of it.

"I try to encourage them to eat clean... and to stay away from all that processed food," head coach Dennis Baker said. "Most of the time, I don't let my kids cut weight." As powerlifters gain muscle, they must strengthen and repair old muscles with help from this relatively strict diet. "I person-

ally prepare for weigh-ins in the long run," Returning lifter Abbey Larson said, "while I'm pretty hungry before weigh-ins, I don't feel unhealthy because I know I had a really good diet."

The athletes must stay aware of their weights throughout the weigh-in week. Each person is weighed an abundance of times throughout the season and before every meet so that the coaches can monitor their progress and make sure they aren't dropping or gaining too much weight. "Our coaches are there for advice and health tips, but it is essentially up to the lifter whether they choose to lose weight or gain weight for a different weight class" junior powerlifter Rylee Bonafilia said.

As these athletes strive to land in their weight classes, some of them work to keep a lower weight by eating less food and drinking less water. "On the day of weigh-ins, I don't eat

at all and only drink in the morning" Larson said, "you go to the restroom as much as you can and you wear your lightest clothes on the scale."

Overall, there is a justifiable stigma surrounding the weight you must be as a powerlifting athlete. Although the lifters are expected to maintain a healthy diet, it is not reinforced individually by the coaches. This leads to athletes letting themselves go hungry for much of the weigh in week and not getting enough nutrients until they eat directly afterwards. "There's instances when I get very hungry, but it's a small price to pay for what I'm hoping the end result will be," Bonafilia said. The most important thing for powerlifters to realize is the need for a more long-term diet change, rather than a short period of starvation, combatted by an overload of fast food after weighing in.

## Nebraska basketball has decent start, chance for special year

The Nebraska mens basketball program has gotten off to a decent start to begin the 2017-2018 season. Head Coach Tim Miles began his sixth season in charge with a concerning 79-56 loss at St. Johns, and a 9 point loss to UCF. The Huskers then got going and won four of their next five, with wins vs Boston College and then #14 Minnesota. Nebraska again looked good last time out, a controversial loss to Creighton on some questionable officiating. At 7-4 Nebraska squarely has its sights set on the NCAA Tournament.

On Saturday Night, the Huskers will welcome #13 Kansas to Pinnacle Bank Arena. The Jayhawks will be angry, coming off back to back losses to Washington and Arizona State. After that, Nebraska will need to avoid their annual horrendous loss to a mid major before continuing conference play in a down year for the Big Ten. If Nebraska goes into 2018 at 10-5, 9 wins in the league is not hard to see.

There are only two league games it is hard to see Nebraska winning, at Purdue and at Minnesota. With the remaining 14 games all the Huskers need to do is win 9. That is not hard to see at all, especially with teams such as Wisconsin, Northwestern and Iowa, all

underperforming so far this year.

Nebraska has had some key players this year that have contributed to this start. Glynn Watson Jr. has played well at point guard thus far, averaging nearly 14 points per game and leading the team in assists and steals with 3.6 and 2.0 per game respectively. The Junior had 29 points and 9 rebounds against Minnesota. Isaac Copeland has gotten better as the

**ARI SALTZMAN**  
DOUBLE DUTY

season has continued as well. The Georgetown transfer has averaged 12.7 points per game and 6.6 rebounds a game. The junior is coming off of a double-double performance against Creighton. For the first time in a while, Miles

has serious depth in the frontcourt. Along with Copeland, Winthrop transfer Dubby Okeke and Jordy Tshimanga have helped provide a lift when Copeland is on the bench. The biggest difference between this year and last year in the front court, has been Isiah Roby. The sophomore leads the team in blocks, and has been has had a huge presence around the basket.

Last year, Anton Gill went down with an injury right before the beginning of conference play. So far Gill has been a valuable piece of the bench for Miles. Not only does the senior help provide depth, he also has been a major asset to Nebraska's ability to shoot the three. The Huskers have performed vastly better in that department this year, than compared to last year.

James Palmer Jr. arguably has been the biggest difference between this year and last year. The Miami transfer leads the team in scoring at 14.2 points per game. His size allows him to be a threat in paint and get to the foul line, as well as the ability to shoot the three. Those two things have greatly helped a Nebraska team in dire need to those two things.

The goal this year continues to be the same as it was at the beginning of the year. Make the NCAA tournament and preferably win a game in the tournament. Nebraska is the only power 5 program to have yet to win a tournament game. The keys to achieving it appear to be simple. Watson needs to continue his stellar play, and if he does that, the defense should be able to hold opponents in check for the most part, and do just enough to win the game. It would not be hard to see Miles' squad winning 18-20 games with that formula

The Huskers certainly has a chance of accomplishing their goal this season. In down year for the Big Ten, Nebraska needs to take advantage. The league may only get 6 teams into the dance, but Nebraska is one of the few Big Ten teams that has provided some optimism through one month the season. With wins already over Minnesota, Duke slayer Boston College, and an opportunity against Kansas, The Huskers are quietly building an NCAA tournament quality resume with an NCAA tournament caliber roster. It is not every year when Nebraska has a realistic shot at making the tournament, they have this year.



# Central boys basketball fans, coaches ready for success in 2018

**Ari Saltzman**  
staff writer

The boys basketball team opened their 2017-2018 season mid-November with hopes of continuing in a positive direction while simultaneously building off prior seasons. Last year, the team made it to the state tournament at Pinnacle Bank Arena in Lincoln, but lost in the quarterfinals to Kearney 61-50.

Many changes have been made recently to the boys basketball program, highlighted by the return of head coach Eric Behrens.

Behrens was the head coach at Central in 2014, but made the decision to take a job at Peru State College. After posting a 53-41 mark over three years with the Bearcats, Behrens decided to come back to Central. He hopes that his time spent coaching college basketball has allowed for his skills to evolve and improve.

A major reason why Behrens decided to return to Central was to coach his son, Roman, during his final high school season. Roman is one of two returning starters from last year's squad, and he led the team in scoring with 15.8 points per game. Although it is unconventional to have a father coaching his son at the



ALEC ROME | The Register

**Senior Jay Pal attempts a lay-up during the team's first game against Bryan. The Eagles finished with a win of two points but lost their second game by one point against Burke.**

high school varsity level, Behrens said that he enjoys coaching his son. "There is a familiarity there," he said.

The only other returning starter, in addi-

tion to Roman, is senior Jay Pal. He averaged 6.5 points per game.

"I look at it as a new process this year," Behrens said. "Our goal is to win the state

championship, but, at this point, we are still in that 'just trying to get better every day' mode."

Of their seven leading scorers from last season, only three players will be returning: the two seniors and sophomore Max Polk, who averaged 2.3 points per game last season.

Last season, Central started out 2-2, but ended up winning 9 of their subsequent 10 games. They had a nine-game winning streak near the end of the year which allowed them to finish strong with a 19-6 overall record.

Behrens hopes the same kind of player development can occur this year as well. "I think this team is going to be a lot better in February than we are in December – and that is not a bad thing," said Behrens.

"I certainly do not think we will be at our best right away, but part of that is just youth and trying to figure things out with the new coach and some new guys in the rotation."

Coach Behrens, along with many dedicated fans of Central's boys team, is very eager for the season to begin. "They are very unselfish, and they play hard," Behrens said, "I think when you start with those things, it is bound to be a good formula."



EMMA NIELAND | The O-Book

LEFT: Swim team holds their practices at Norris Middle School. RIGHT TOP: Christina Spomer, Abbey Craig, Lauren Anderson, Mia Spencer, Chloe Jones, Francis Gray, Kylie Westphal, Sofie Walenta. BOTTOM: Sophia Sidzyk, Camryn Lewis-Payne, Victoria Risager, Victoria Shradar.

## Swim team adjusts leadership to prepare for anticipated

**Anne Gallagher**  
staff writer

Although there is a lot of new talent splashing into the pool this year, it can't hide the fact that an abundance of skilled seniors graduated last year and left the swim team with a fraction of its former talent. The new school year has brought in new challenges, but also a lot of new strong competitors from the 67 swimmers who made it onto the team from tryouts.

The team has worked in its first few weeks of practice to adjust its leadership roles. "We lost about six or seven girl seniors, so it's really going to have an impact on the girls team, which is going to leave a lot of room for the younger girls to

step up," head coach Kristoff Berzins said. With a win for the girls at the first "swimvite" at Benson High, Berzins sees a bright future for both the boys and girls team this season.

Prominent new leaders stepped up this year to ensure the expected strength of the team. With new freshman up to returning seniors, the team has an age diversity with talent springing up at all four grade levels. "Jessie Ferguson is our returning senior girl this year so she'll be one of our leaders," Berzins said. "Quinn Williams is stepping into the slot that was left by Calvin Depriest." Although the leaders are mostly upperclassmen, an abundance of younger talent is also showing prominence on the team. "As far as underclassmen go, Grant Goding is definitely stepping up in the leadership role," Berzins said.

Expectations are high for this season as swimmers expect more positivity with this altered leadership. "We're more of a positive team and I feel a lot closer to the people on my team more than ever because last year the seniors all had really negative attitudes," varsity swimmer Maggie Germonprez said. "So even though we're not as fast... we are all teammates now and it's a better experience."

Overall, with the change in leadership has come a new structure to the team. Both the boys and girls are working to improve since the loss of the seniors and their talents last year, but a more positive environment has been created. "What I think is most important is everyone being happy and feeling like a team," Germonprez said.

## Economics teacher unites faith, sports to offer Christian club

**Hayley Raney**  
staff writer

Corban Williams is a devoted teacher and Christian who is a member of the international sports ministry, Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA). He has brought the ministries' teachings and program to Central. Williams has worked for Central for two years now.

The motto of Central's FCA program is "To see the world impacted for Jesus Christ through the influences of coaches and athletes." According to Nebraska's own FCA.

So far, 20 student athletes are a part in the program. Central's FCA mission is to "take the gospel of Jesus Christ and explain how you can apply the gospel not only in life but on the ath-

letic playing field," Williams said.

The FCA is a place for Christian athletes to come together and create community. The members meet every Thursday morning and participate in extra-curricular activities, while teaching gospel and keeping everything, Bible based.

The members go through different topics and study including the Bible and Jesus Christ. "For example, we start off with teaching gospel then explain different keys and elements that an athlete has such their goal, audience and ambition and align the Bible with those elements," Williams said.

Williams feels the program benefits the athletes because the Bible explains how 'Jesus is the way of truth and life,' he said. He tries

to allow the students to understand how they can "glorify Jesus on the football field, baseball diamond or volleyball court, etc."

Anyone can participate in Central's FCA program, even those who are not Christian or are newly found Christians. Other staff members such as Jared Hyland and Sam Butler are a part of the FCA program.

The program started last spring. Both coach Williams and Hyland discussed what they can do to enlighten Central. "As Christians we have a great commission our job is to go and express the message of Jesus Christ and what he has done for everybody," Williams said.

FCA counsels the coaches on how to guide them on bringing FCA to Central. Their foun-

datation of the program revolves around the Bible.

He wanted to bring this program to Central because his passion for God, students and sports. "I wanted to do something that can bring all three of those things together and the FCA gives me a platform to do so," Williams.

Since last spring the program has had a Friendsgiving, a weekend of champions event, summer camp and Bible studies.

The FCA headquarters are in Kansas City and had a trip during the first weekend of November in Grand Island, Neb. where 650 students attended, including a few from Central.

"The meaning of FCA program at Central is to express gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone willing to listen," Williams said.



# After winless season, search for new recruit head coach starts

**GRIFFIN** from page 9  
these proposed candidates so special. One aspect that is core to the coaching search is finding an inside hire, someone who is in the building and accessible to students at all time. It is deeper than just accessibility; an inside hire would be ideal to create relationships with staff members and the Central community. "It helps build more of the culture that is sustainable," Dillon said. Other characteristics Dillon is looking for in a head coach is good organization, communication with parents, humility, adaptability and an

understanding of the game that he feels can make people successful.

Class A champion Omaha North has built the model, according to Dillon, that he is trying to work off of. Dillon wants a coach that can delegate in order to handle the added responsibility of being a football coach in OPS, especially at Central. "Head coaching, not just in football but in any job here, is tough," Dillon said. "The demand for success, the tradition, the lore of working downtown at Central High School. You really have to understand and more so have the right types of experiences."

He cited North as an example because of their coaching staff. Dillon believes that a coach who can surround himself with assistants who make up for personal weaknesses can build a championship-caliber team. "Someone's got to start their coaching career somewhere. If we were to hire somebody, it's really about can they find the right people in place around them that they can build a successful program."

The decision also comes down to the system the next coach will implement. At times, this can directly affect recruiting and the achievement of a program. "I think kids today

want to see a system that they can flourish in, whether that's the old 'I-Back High,' a spread or option game, depending on the skill position," Dillon said. "Ultimately though, I think kids just want to be successful. You have to have the structure in place that's going to allow kids to flourish within the system."

A new head coach has yet to be announced, but even after a new coach is hired, Dillon knows the process of rebuilding will be a long and winding road.

"It's not going to be easy. It's going to take time."

## Former Nebraska head coach shows class after firing

**NEBRASKA** from page 9

was fired. Back to back home losses of 38-17 and 56-14 made the season looked bleak. Nebraska then closed the year by becoming the 20th team in the history of college football to give up 50 points in three straight games, and finished 4-8, the schools worst record since 1961. Along the way Riley lost his best recruit.

Nebraska needed to get rid of Mike Riley. As classy as the guy is, it was time for a change. Times are very dangerous for Nebraska and this was clearly not the right guy to get Nebraska back to where it needs to be. All sorts of bad records were

broken this year, the defense made Kevin Cosgrove's '07 unit look like the '85 Bears, but most importantly, Riley lost his team.

Riley does deserve credit though for how he handled the situation. He handled everything with class, and his players did for the most part too. After he was fired Riley gave a calm farewell press conference, rather than yelling at the athletic director in front of the team like his predecessor did. Bill Moos did what needed to be done, and hopefully his new head coach can bring Nebraska back to where it needs to be.



Photo Courtesy of OMAHA WORLD HERALD  
Mike Riley was paid \$2.7 million annually for the past three years as head coach of Neb.

## Program's culture matters more than talent, contributes to winning

**Alec Rome**  
staff writer

In modern sports, a lot of attention is given toward the talent and skill of particular athletes. Hours upon hours of programming and articles covering "draft stock" flood the airwaves of major sports networks. Yet, with a magnified look at local and national sports teams, it is easy to see the real reason behind the success or failure of a particular team.

Talent does make a difference. A team lacking talent can have boundless enthusiasm and maximum effort and still come up short. So, why do teams like the Cleveland Browns and the Philadelphia 76ers continue to get top draft picks and prospects from college and still manage to achieve a level of lackluster performance?

The answer is simple: these teams are missing a winning culture.

That does not mean that 76ers or Browns lose all the time (even though the Browns have) but that all the necessary pieces required in a successful organization are not there.

Take Omaha Central as an example. Lots of our coaches have built or are in the process of building winning cultures. As previously mentioned, talent cannot be completely forgotten, and it is undoubtedly much harder to find in high school.

The recent struggles by the football program are indicative of a larger problem that occurred during the season. There was plenty of talent that could have contributed to a better previous two seasons. However, it becomes a fight with doubt after that first blowout loss.

The Eagles could not recover for multiple reasons, but the absence of talent or glimmers of greatness is not one of them.

It only takes one loss to trigger a domino effect of positive or negative consequences.

Thoughts start going through athletes' heads and they start to lose confidence in themselves and the purpose of the journey. That is how winless seasons are born; the process of getting better succumbs to emotion and personal goals. The programs that can take a loss and grow from it are the ones that can truly win.

***It only takes one loss to trigger a domino effect of positive or negative consequences.***

As any sports fan knows, team sports require a commitment to the goals of the team in order for everyone to attain success. It is a concept known as "servant leadership," as said by John Calipari, head coach of the Kentucky Wildcats.

He explained in his book, *Success Is The Only Option: The Art of Coaching Extreme Talent*, that the success of each individual should be based upon others' success, not always his or her own. This is normally a process for the young athlete to understand, especially when college coaches make promises about playing time. It becomes normal to care about yourself first when you're a college athlete. That is not a terrible thing, as long as that occasional selfishness does not become a normal sight on the field of play.

Let's go back to the 76ers. They played the Golden State Warriors-- defending NBA champions --and found themselves down by 20 near the end of the half. Philadelphia has talent that is somewhat comparable to the Warriors; top draft picks and soon-to-be annual all-star selections. Teams with a losing culture would play their bench and accept their fate. The Warriors chose to continue fighting, fix mistakes, and because of a winning culture along with top talent, they pulled out a victory.

If the roles would have been flipped, the Warriors would have won by 40.

It is because the 76ers are in the process of building that winning culture. They have looked better than they have in previous ugly seasons, but it takes time to build camaraderie and accountability.

The Huskers have found themselves in a similar predicament; multiple athletic programs with low achievement. A 4-8 season sparked the dismissal of head football coach Mike Riley after three seasons, and men's basketball coach Tim Miles is on the hot seat.

Both coaches are fantastic role models and class acts, but those characteristics do not always translate to on-field success. Nebraska fans have certainly made that known.

Coaches, players and fans all have a role in how the culture of a particular program is received. It is up to each individual piece to determine whether that perception is an honorable one.

## Soccer pales in comparison to football, will never be America's favorite

Soccer will never be as popular as football in America. It is as simple as that. Americans will always love the sheer violence of football and hate the internationalism of soccer.

Despite rising safety concerns, football's popularity is still growing. Over twenty million boys play football in America, compared to soccer's mere three million. The large youth following gives football a strong fan base that will last for years to come that soccer simply does not have. And although soccer's participation rates are growing while football's is decreasing, the increase is not drastic enough to overtake football as the top sport in Ameri-

cans' heart.

The drama of football is something that soccer cannot replace. When people watch a football game, there are countless fanfares outside the game that liven the program (half-time shows, funny commercials, cheerleaders, etc.) that soccer simply does not have. Even during the game there are countless instances for drama-injuries, penalties, coach fits, and fights. While soccer has some of those elements, they are much less pronounced.

The lack of drama contributes to soccer's main lack of popularity: the slowness of the game. Soccer games go long periods without a



**KAITLYN ENGEL**  
"DETAIL"

score. Soccer games go long periods without a score. And while the game may like a frenzy of

action, it is truly misleading as soccer can go whole games without scoring

There is also a small bit of national pride tied in with football's popularity. It is one of America's hallmarks. Football was born, raised and lives in America. With soccer's international roots, it may be America's arrogance that keeps soccer from becoming a nationally popular sport.

Soccer does not have the necessary components to be interesting enough. Unless soccer majority reforms itself to appeal to Americans, it will never be the most popular sport.





### A Christmas Carol

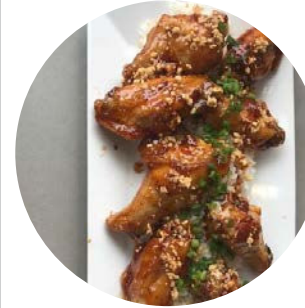
Junior participated in the annual performance of A Christmas Carol at the Omaha Community Playhouse.

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### Reviews

Staffers review newly released music and films, video games and up-and-coming local restaurants that are building their way from the bottom.

PAGE 19



### The best Omaha-area sushi restaurants

A go-to lunch and dinner meal as of late, is sushi. The Register reviews five local restaurants for those craving sushi.

PAGES 20-21

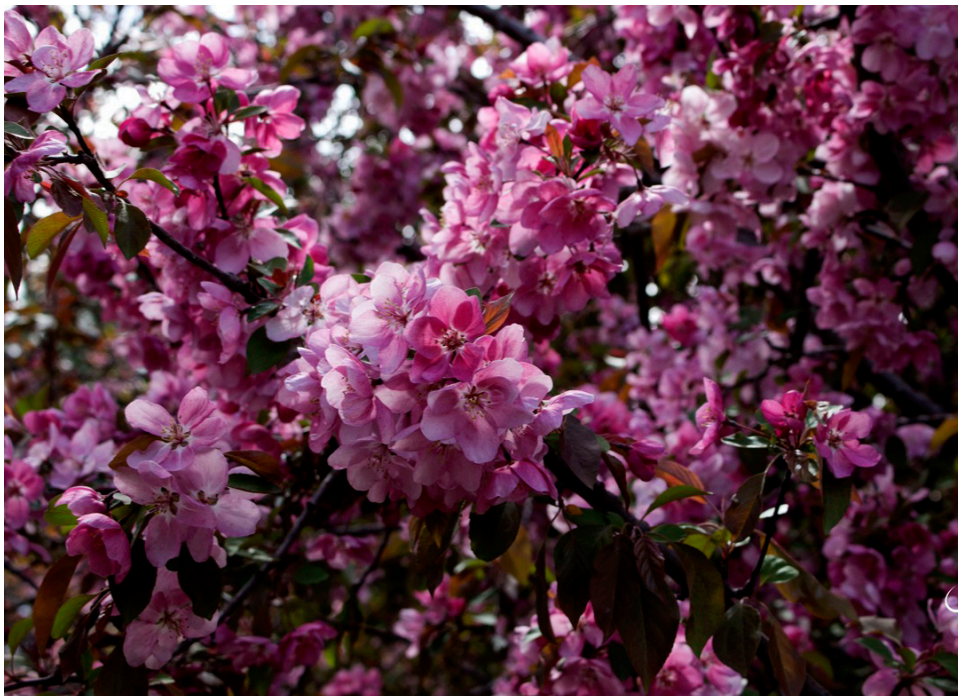
# arts & style

## THE REGISTER

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TOP LEFT: Senior Shianne Irwin practices photography almost everyday as a member of The O-Book, Central's yearbook. TOP RIGHT: Photo by Becky Johnson. MIDDLE: Photo by Shianne Irwin. BOTTOM LEFT: Senior Becky Johnson has been taking pictures seriously for about four years now. BOTTOM RIGHT: Photo by Becky Johnson



# STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHERS

Landscape and portrait photography is the main focus for these two student photographers.

### Hayley Raney staff writer

Shianne Irwin and Becky Johnson are just two of many student photographers. They both plan to take their passion for photography to college and hope turn it into a career.

Both girls have been interested in photography for the entirety of their high school careers. Both of their focuses include landscape and portrait photography.

Johnson knew she loved photography when she was a freshman. Her father was

a former photographer that pushed her to try it out. Now, she blends business and pleasure by profiting from taking photos. She does senior shoots for \$50, family photoshoots for \$150 and varying advertising projects starting at \$30.

Johnson draws a lot of inspiration from photographer Darren Jew whose subjects include nature, underwater and tourism. "He does exactly what I want to do," Johnson said.

In order to further her career, achieve her dreams of becoming a world

**PHOTOS** on page 16







TOP: Photo by Becky Johnson  
MIDDLE: Photo by Shianne Irwin  
BOTTOM LEFT: Photo by Becky Johnson  
BOTTOM RIGHT: Photo by Becky Johnson

## Teens favor expression through photos

**PHOTOS** from page 15

photographer and step out of her comfort zone, Johnson hopes to attend the University of Central Florida. She hopes to find inspiration and wishes to be challenged in a totally different environment than what she is accustomed to.

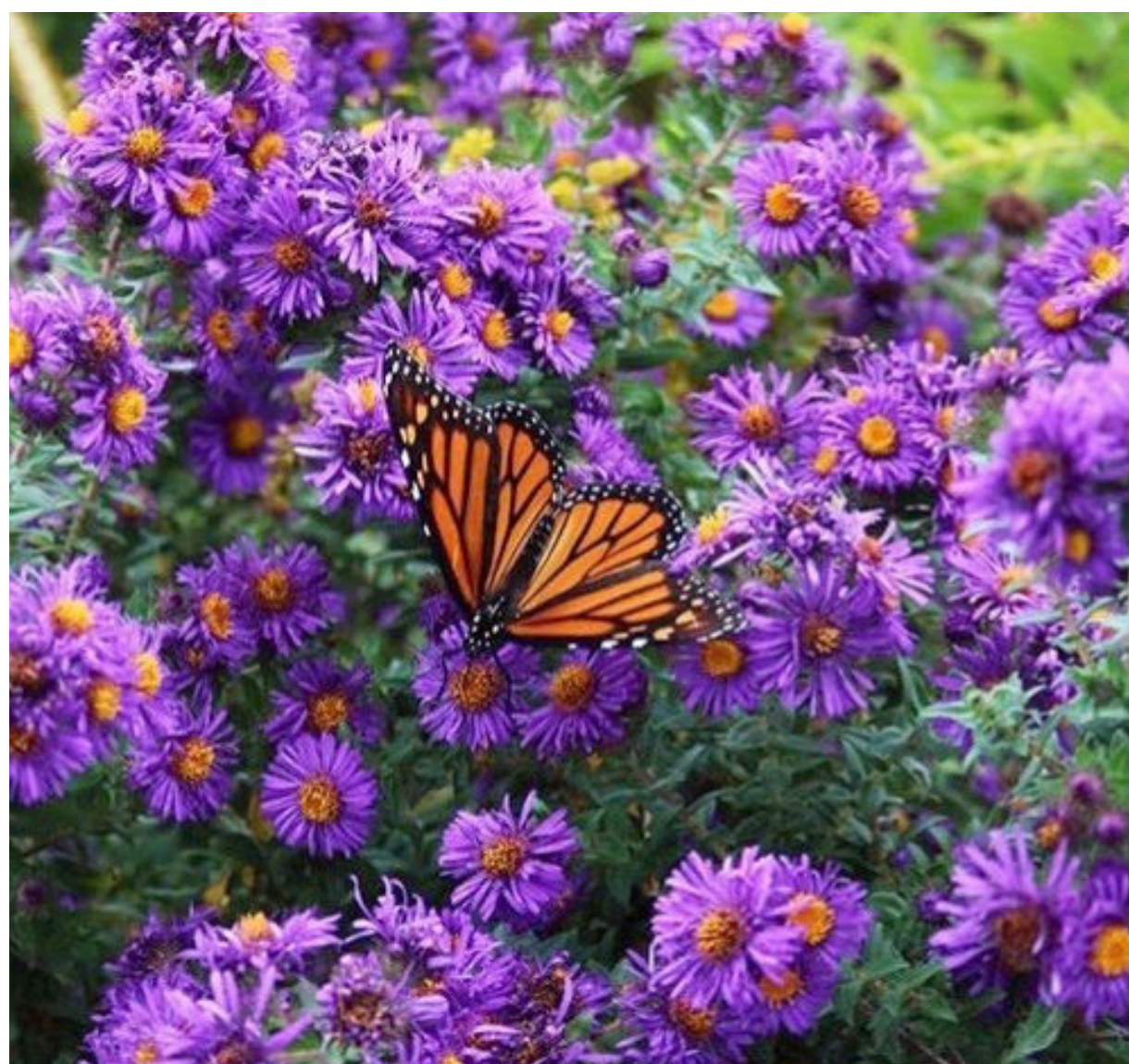
Both Johnson and Irwin plan to take their photography skills out of state and/or the country. Irwin hasn't decided where she wants to go to college yet, but she is determined to become a photographer for National Geographic. She wants to become the female Ansel Adams who was a well-known landscape photographer. In addition to this, Irwin wants to own her own studio one day.

Sophomore year, Irwin decided to take a pho-

tography class at the Career Center where she knew she would partake in taking pictures. "I was always taking selfies, but I never thought I'd want to be a photographer," Irwin said.

To earn money, Irwin takes portraits for \$75. She utilizes an Arnold Clark style for her pictures. She also frequently does edits on the side for no additional cost.

Johnson recommends that aspiring photographers "not be afraid to go out and get clients. Be original because there are lots of photographers," she said. On the other hand, Irwin advises that students have patience. True to her dream, she often quotes Ansel Adams saying, "You don't take a photograph, you make it."





# Several popular Marvel movies in store for upcoming year

Emily Engel  
staff writer

## Black Panther

The Black Panther was first introduced to the Marvel Cinematic Universe in 2016 in the movie Captain America: Civil War. The character, played by Chadwick Boseman, is the king of the fictional African nation called Wakanda. In the movie will focus on what happens when King T'Challa's (Black Panther) leadership is challenged by two, so far, unnamed foes who want to destroy Wakanda. T'Challa will team up with the CIA and members of the Wakandan special forces to save his throne and his country. The cast of The Black Panther includes a diverse variety of well-known and up-and-coming actors such as Lupita Nyong'o as Nakia, Danai Gurira as Okoye, Angela Bassett as T'Challa's mother, the queen, and Martin Freeman as CIA agent, Everett Ross. Filming began in January 2017 and finished in late April. The film is set to come out on February 16, 2018 and is expected to do well amongst Marvel fans as well as in the Box Office.

## Avengers: Infinity War

In 2012, Marvel released The Avengers, teaming together both some well-known and some new heroes to fight an army of aliens brought to Earth by Loki. The movie was an immediate success leading to several sequels and stand-alone movies, but the series is expected to end by 2019 with the movies Avengers: Infinity War Part One and Two. Part One, coming out in 2018, will focus on Thanos, who is collecting all of the Infinity Stones to gain power over reality. The Avengers will team up with the Guardians of the Galaxy to stop

**UPCOMING MARVEL MOVIES**

Movie	Plot Summary	Characters	Actors	Release Date
<b>BLACK PANTHER</b>	The nation Wakanda's future is threatened by two unnamed foes.	King T'Challa, Nakia, Okoye, Everett Ross	Chadwick Boseman, Lupita Nyong'o, Danai Gurira, Angela Bassett, Martin Freeman	February 16, 2018
<b>ANT-MAN AND THE WASP</b>	Ant-Man and the Wasp will work together to uncover secrets from the past.	Ant-Man, Wasp, Hope Pym, Hank Pym, Cassie Lang	Scott Lang, Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Abby Ryder	July 6, 2018
<b>AVENGERS: INFINITY WAR</b>	Thanos is collecting infinity stones to gain power over reality. The Avengers and the Guardians of the Galaxy will team up to stop Thanos on his quest.	Captain America, Thor, Iron Man, Star Lord, Gamora, Rocket	Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth, Robert Downey Jr., Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana, Bradley Cooper	May 4, 2018

**Statistics**

Top Ten Most Popular Marvel Characters

Most popular Marvel character in NC

http://observedandnoticed.com/nc

ELIZABETH HERNANDEZ | Contributing Graphic Artist

Thanos in his quest for universal domination. The cast will include the already well-known Avengers, Chris Evans as Captain America, Chris Hemsworth as Thor, and Robert Downey Jr. as Iron Man. Also cast are Chris Pratt

as Star Lord, Zoe Saldana as Gamora, the estranged adopted daughter of Thanos, and Bradley Cooper as Rocket. Filming for Infinity Wars started in 2016, the two movies will be filled back to back, though Part Two's release hasn't been scheduled, Avengers: Infinity War Part One will come out on May 4, 2018.

## Ant-Man and the Wasp

Though the character Ant-Man has been in Marvel comics for decades, he only just entered the Marvel Cinematic Universe in 2015, in his stand-alone film. Ant-Man, played by Paul Rudd is a thief who cares about little more than his daughter Cassandra. One day, when he robs the wrong house, he finds himself in jail and in the company of scientist Dr. Henry (Hank) Pym, who gives him the suit and title of Ant-Man. He then uses the shrinking suit to save the world from Darren Cross, Yellowjacket, who wants to abuse the new shrinking technology.

In Ant-Man and the Wasp, Ant-Man (Scott Lang) will work together with the Wasp (Hope Pym) to uncover secrets about their past. The cast includes many characters from the first film such as Evangeline Lilly as Hope Pym, Michael Douglas as Hank Pym, and Abby Ryder Fortson as Cassie Lang, Scott Lang's daughter. Filming for Ant-Man and the Wasp started in August 2017 and finished in mid-September. Though the movie won't come out until July 6, 2018, there is speculation that Ant-Man will be in Avengers: Infinity War in May 2018.

# The movement exposing sexual misconduct requires education

Recently in the entertainment industry, there have been a flood of sexual harassment allegations. After hearing famous and powerful names such as Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, Ben Affleck and even Donald Trump harassing women, it makes you start to wonder how much goes on that is left unreported.

In response to victims telling the world what has happened to them, there was the #MeToo hashtag that went viral on social media. Normal citizens and celebrities alike took part, and it is extremely disturbing seeing how many people have been sexually harassed or raped. People in every profession were posting the chilling hashtag to show that they too had been raped. And though there were thousands that participated in the hashtag, there are still those that cannot or feel that they cannot come forward, and it makes me sick. There are so many unreported rape cases that any statistic that exists for rape is undoubtedly low. And unfortunately because of the wealth

that famous celebrities hold, there are probably even more victims who won't come forward or were paid to stay silent.

It is a terrible thought that without victims coming out and telling the world what happened to them, these men could still be terrorizing people in private and living a glamorous life in public. But just because victims are telling their story doesn't mean that everything is fixed. There are still those that say that they're doing it for attention or money. There are still victim blamers. There are still rape apologists. But when victims come forward the rest of the world is forced to acknowledge that we have a serious problem with rape and rape culture in our country and in the rest of the world.

Once we acknowledge that there is an issue with rape, there are steps that can be taken to prevent it. There is no reason that students shouldn't have access to proper sex education. There is no reason. If young people can learn at an early age what consent actually is, there can be no

more excusing or sweeping aside rape. And the same way that we teach girls to be not go out alone or accept drinks from strange men, we need to teach boys to not rape. It sounds so simple yet it's not being done. And though the way our society is set up it is necessary for women to take precaution, if we are constantly telling them ways to prevent rape rather than telling men not to rape, the blame is being placed on women and victims. We tell them that they were out too late or that they shouldn't have let themselves get that drunk, and when victims blame themselves, it is less likely that they will report when they have been raped or sexually assaulted. Teaching boys not to rape is a necessity.

Hopefully the sexual allegations that are in the media right now will open up discussion on what we can do to fix our society. Hopefully it will make more people come forward when something has happened to them and not to blame themselves. Hopefully our society will grow and learn that something has to be done about rape in our culture.



SIMONE DAVIS  
SIMON(E) SAYS

# Rock music necessary to modern hits, making a subtle comeback

Rap and pop dominate much of the music that is created and listened to today, but rock from the 70's, 80's and 90's may be making a comeback.

The embrace of modern music has decreased the number of listeners to Rock, but the truth is that more Rock Music exists than it ever has. Thanks to Apple Music, YouTube, Spotify, etc., people are now more than ever able to listen to any song they choose to.

These music sources do not accurately exemplify Rock's liveliness, but it does explain how people are able to keep Rock Music alive. The answer of Rock Music unfortunately lies within death. Many musicians from the teen years of the 20th century are beginning to pass away from old age.

The death of musicians such as Tom Petty, Chuck Berry and Elton John all within the past two years spiked the amount that their music was listened to. For me, listening to

many of the "oldies" has caused a transpiration of liking for this music. Thus, I continue to surround myself with it, in the car, doing homework and writing this article.

Not only do deaths cause people to reminisce on this music, but also the places that Rock music is often played. For example, at a Central football game, the song "Downtown" will without a doubt be played and at a baseball game "Sweet Caroline" will most likely be played. Hearing these classics leads to rediscovering a love for other songs of this era in music.

The solar eclipse also led to many songs such as "Total Eclipse of the Heart" sang by Bonnie Tyler to influence people to listen to music that was once so common. This along with other song titles that pertain to other natural occurrences is just another way in which rock music is recognized.

Music took its biggest hit "the day the

music died," as Don McLean sang in his song "American Pie". In a plane crash, notable singers Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper all died on their way to Okoboji.



CARLSON KOCH  
CARL'S SON

But, for music supposedly dying 58 years ago, music is more alive than it was then with new mediums that music is distributed in.

Much like other disasters, the death of

these three greats led to one of the most famous rock hits produced by Don McLean. Often played in remembrance of Holly, Valens and Bopper on the day that their plane crashed.

On local levels, many bands who play have some sort of Rock music fused within, but many people overlook this piece of music played. This is because there are current bands that are as famous as Beyoncé or any other popular musicians. But, when one does arise, chances are that they will bring back a lot of rock fans once again.

Rock music lost a lot of its popularity when pop and rap music first became well-known, but since then many teenagers and parents have begun to listen once again.

Music is not simply something that dies, so to say that Rock Music has died is wrong and will more than likely be.



# Junior drama club member performs in *A Christmas Carol*

Emma Whaley  
staff writer

Those who celebrate the holidays and enjoy the theatre may recall going to the Omaha Community Playhouse to watch "A Christmas Carol" once a year. It appears to be a tradition among many Omahans. The production of "A Christmas Carol" has been running for 42 years as of this winter. Of course, as with all traditions, things have changed over the years, most notably the cast. While the lead roles are often held by the same actors many years in a row, the ensemble and minor roles change year-to-year.

Junior Annie Hekl, the drama club historian and member of the dance ensemble for Central's recent musical, *Grease*, is a member of the cast for the 2017 production of *A Christmas Carol*.

Hekl doesn't have prominent lines, but she is in the dances. "I am in the adult ensemble," she said, "So adult ensemble is in the main street scenes and the party scenes."

The audition process for a public production is very different from a high school play. "For the whole season, they did it in one audition," Hekl said, "So I was actually auditioning for *Singing in the Rain* ... but then they emailed me and they were like 'Hey, do you want to come to call-backs for 'A Christmas Carol?'"

As with many young people who participate in large drama productions, Hekl began acting when she was nine-years-old in the 2009 production of "A Christmas Carol," so going back to her roots was easy.

"It's really fun [to watch the child actors in the show now] because they look up to you ... they're doing what I did and it's really cool because maybe someday they'll be where I am now."

Being in the dance ensemble for the *Grease* production, Hekl may have a leg up in the dance scenes of "A Christmas Carol."

"In one of the party scenes, we do a polka, and that's one of the hardest ones but it's really fun ... I actually have a dance partner ... I get lifted up in both of [the dance scenes] because I'm so small."

This isn't the first year a Central student has participated in a professional production. Another student is in a production of "The Best Christmas Carol Ever" at The Rose. Last year a student was in the 2016 production of "A Christmas Carol." Central drama students seem to search consistently for bigger and better opportunities.



Junior Annie Hekl has performed in the Omaha Community Playhouse production of "A Christmas Carol" for many years. She has grown as the show has and now takes the role of a leader amongst the younger actors.



Photos Courtesy of ANNIE HEKL

## Winter fashion season brings sophistication to streetwear

An underrated season for fashion is winter. It's often overshadowed by autumn fashion and isn't given much thought. It's cold, therefore people don't really care about how they look as long as it's warm. In fact, on the runways, designers mainly focus on the fall aspect of fall/winter collections when lines are presented in the spring in various cities. It's understandable as autumn fashion is unique and wearable year-round, but winter fashion really shows deep cognizance of fashion in a person (or designer) if it's styled and worn the right way. Here's to winter fashion in full-blown vogue and items to expect as autumn digresses and winter progresses.

**STRIKING SILVER:** To complement any winter outfit this year is the one vivid color: silver. Prevalent on the fall/winter runways was metallic silver, embedded silver, silver fringe, and most importantly, shining silver. This is harder to incorporate for everyday wear but doable. It's even harder to style an outfit and the results make a person look like tin foil. The color silver is bound to stand out in a crowd of people. Striking silver matches with party looks, professional looks, formal and casual looks and more. Runway looks include sparkly silver bodycons from Gucci and Saint Laurent, slip cut out dresses from Paco Rabanne and studded



ZOIA MORROW  
ZOIA 101

silvers found in Alexander McQueen fall winter collection.

**TRENCH (OVER) COATS:** The swanky, lengthy coats long run in the fashion industry is apparent to anyone paying the least amount attention to fashion trends in the past two centuries. Thomas Burberry, 21-year-old from Basingstoke, Hampshire founded the menswear business in 1856 later turned creative fashion house. Burberry is known for its use of neutral and darker colors and especially Winter fashion. Burberry was one of the signature manufacturers of trench coats before, during and after World War I. It was a coat worn by officers in trenches (hence trench coats). Soon enough, overcoats became a symbol for the elite. In modern aspects, the trench

coat can complete and type of outfit. Knit and cowl sweaters underneath a trench coat is the perfect description for winter fashion. Bonus points for silver overcoats this winter too.

**RUFFLES AND TULLE:** Ruffles and tulle patterns do not come to mind when one thinks of winter, but from the likes of Chanel, Dior and Stella McCartney it is a style one must consider when thinking of winter formals or high-end New Year's parties. Ruffles and tulle is chic on just about any person with any color. Some can argue ruffles and tulle is a gender-neutral pattern and works under a blazer for men. This is a sure way to slyly bolden one's style preferences.

**POPPING POLKA DOTS:** This winter season revolves and belongs to polka dots. Loewe began the polka dot trend according to its latest runway collection. Polka dot comes in all forms; tops, trousers, scarves and shoes. Incorporating polka dot into an outfit will go a long way into developing a sense of style for the winter season. Because polka dots are so versatile they can be worn in almost any form in any way and still be the center of the outfit.

**PLATFORM BOOT:** Last year, booties were the go-to shoe for fall fashion. Whether that be in terms of party looks, street wear, professional outfits, booties

were the shoes to throw on for the extra momentum in an outfit. But this year, the platform boot is taking its place. For those who do not know what booties are they are high-heeled boots that go up to the ankle and on the other hand, platform boots are almost the same but give an extra 'oomph' to heights with the thick two-three-inch platform. They're pretty much platform heels but boots which is beneficial because they can be worn in the winter. The platform boot will be worn in any instances where the shoe can be shown off because of the greatness the shoe possesses.

**DENIM DUTY:** The conclusion to winter fashion 2017. Denim jackets never really went out of style, but they are back in full force. Simply enough, denim on denim applies to denim shirts with denim pants or skirts. This fashionable trend is a casual street wear look. The blended mix of dark and light wash denim complement each other well and happen to look incredibly stylish.

**\*BONUS: Velvet:** This trend is on to tread carefully on. While it's cute it is highly overdone on just about everything. Keeping velvet simplistic is the best option for street wear. Keep an eye out and an ear open for an abundance of velvet jackets, and even suits this winter season.



# FOOD:

**Jackson Godwin**  
staff writer

On Saturday, Jan. 9, 2016, a fire destroyed the historic building on the corner of 11th and Howard in the Old Market. Since then, the restaurant has done everything it possible to make M's better than ever.

After a long-fought year of work, the building was restored back to excellent condition. Many did not believe the Pub would come back, much less in the exact same spot it was before. With the new and improved renovations to the Pub it has added more modern attractions for customers who come in.

M's Pub has been part of the old market and its culture for 40 plus years and has provided reliable food with quality service for all those years. After the building itself was unexpectedly burned down, fire fighters and other citizens worked with M's and the workers to clean up and restore the building as much as possible. Many believed the building itself would not be restored after the damages done following the fire. Even with the set back, the new renovations have combined a balance of old tradition with modern twists that bring in an even wider variety of people.

The atmosphere that surrounds M's Pub is a very elegant with unique qualities surrounded by a traditional building right in the heart of the old market. Although, the restaurant found a way to add in small



Photo Courtesy of **TRIP ADVISOR**

but noticeably modern things such as repainted walls with updated features. The Pub provides a good eating environment for anyone who goes and seasonal changes that will intrigue customers to return each time. Another perk that the restaurant provides is that it is both suitable for a family gathering, a business gathering, or just a last-minute bite to eat.

This restaurant is not the average sports pub, but it follows a more European pub that fits in with the old market environment around it.

The service was outstanding as I was greeted right after walking through the doors. Each server was prepared for orders and did not slack when it came to making sure my meal was as great as everyone else's. Another plus to the new renovations is having the opportunity to make the restaurant to the community's liking. So while the fire to the building setback M's Pub at first it, did improve many qualities to the restaurant to make it better. I would rate this restaurant four and a half stars out of five.

# FILM:

**Malcolm Durfee O'Brien**  
staff writer

DC's new film "Justice League" was released on Nov. 17 and seeks to redirect the franchise after the critical failures of "Batman V Superman" and "Suicide Squad." Unfortunately, the film fails nearly every attempt to make it unique or enjoyable.

The story of "Justice League" is boring and disjointed. The plot is one of a generic superhero movie in which the villain is seeking objects of power for world domination and the heroes must stop him because he's evil. This plot could have sufficed should the film have interesting characters, unfortunately there are too many of these characters introduced to make any of them interesting and each personality is so poorly defined that their beliefs change for seemingly random reasons.

The film jumps clumsily between these characters in an attempt to create a coherent story, but fails as the film's genre seems to change scene to scene. It also introduces new plot points without any tension or build up and also has entire characters and scenes that could have been cut from the finished product. A major component of a good superhero movie is that of an interesting and threatening villain. "Justice League" lacks an interesting villain, he is introduced in one of the aforementioned plot points and is given backstory in a heavy-handed monologue from Wonder Woman that serves as an exposition dump, one of many in this film.

These characters are also dumb, as shown with a whole sequence when they decide to risk one of the MacGuffin devices in order to potentially resurrect the character of Superman.

The film's acting is usually acceptable though laughable at times. Gal Gadot's performance as Wonder Woman is as charming and effective as it was in her standalone movie, though her character is given some of the worst dialogue in the film. Ben Affleck is fine as Batman, though he does deliver some of his lines in an awkward way. Ezra Miller starts out awful as the Flash, seeming to not understand the gravity of his dialogue, however his performance improved greatly and became one of the highlights by the end of the film. This is a good point to mention the acting's greatest flaw, its inconsistency. Almost every actor seems to start the film out in a bored and uninterested mood and finishes the film enthusiastically, it can be assumed that this has to do with the reshoots that "Justice League" went through.

Jason Momoa is probably given the worst dialogue in the movie as Aquaman and has some of the dumbest lines in the movie. Ray Fisher really tries to portray Cybor well, but is unable to due to the character's poor dialogue and relatively short screen time. Henry Caville plays Superman the way he plays all of his character and delivers his dialogue as if he's reading a newspaper. Ciaran Hinds' performance as the villain of Steppenwolf is acceptable but, again, suffers from heavy handed dialogue.

Dialogue is the primary flaw in the film, with little urgency being infused into the way the characters talk. None of the film's characters seem concerned that the world is

**JUSTICE LEAGUE** on page 22

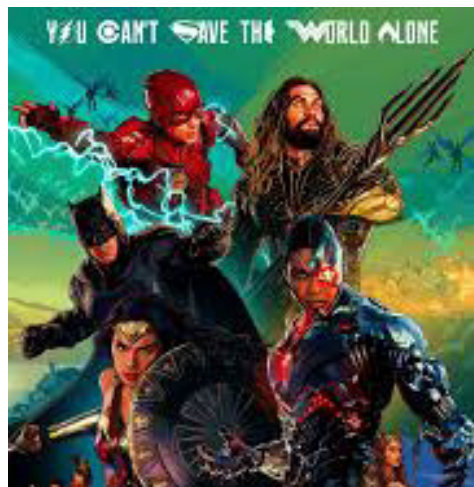


Photo Courtesy of **FANPOP**

# GAMES:

**Julian Hock-Beaty**  
graphics editor

"Call of Duty" is a first-person shooter videogame franchise that has been exciting gamers for nearly 15 years. As of 2017, It is ranked as the fourth best-selling video game series with over 250 million copies sold worldwide. Finding its roots in a WWII setting, the franchise kicked off in 2003 and was an instant hit. As the years went by, "Call of Duty" began focusing on other infamous conflicts, blending fictitious story lines and authentic locations to align with real historic events.

The list of game development companies that have worked on the franchise is quite extensive. Initially working with Treyarch and Infinity Ward, "Call of Duty" expanded to Sledgehammer Games in 2014. Sledgehammer's release of "Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare" was marked as the first "Call of Duty" game set in the distant future. Though Treyarch had released "Call of Duty: Black Ops II" (set in 2025) back in 2012, "Advanced Warfare" was the first to jump to past realism and into the realm of science fiction.

This new direction prompted the franchise to continue moving their timeline forward, which received mixed emotions from their player base. In fact, each following incarnation of "Call of Duty" was met with varying fan reception by a pretty wide margin. The last few titles in the franchise have been set quite far in the future, completely changing the classic "Call of Duty" play style. Players had jet pack-like abilities, weapons were insanely advanced and futuristic, etcetera. After exhausting the future setting, "Call of Duty" was definitely due for a change.

Sledgehammer stepped up to the plate. In April of this year, announced that they would be returning to a WWII setting for the next game, appropriately titled "Call of Duty: WWII". Due to the underwhelming impressions of the last few games, Sledgehammer was determined to knock it out of the park. An extensive amount of research went into the creation of this game, and early news of the game's production seemed very promising.

Nov 3rd marked released of "WWII" in the United States. The game made over \$500 million in sales during its first weekend, which doubled the earnings of Infinity Ward's "Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare" opening weekend last year.

Sledgehammer made an effort to polish "WWII" extensively, breaking the trend of rush-

**CALL OF DUTY** on page 22



Photo Courtesy of **CALL OF DUTY**

# MUSIC:

**Zoia Morrow**  
executive editor

When people think of Holiday albums, particularly Christmas albums, Mariah Carey's "Merry Christmas" is the classic album that comes to mind. While that is a given, plentiful Christmas albums have been produced in the 23 years since Mariah Carey released "Merry Christmas." One of them being singer-songwriter, Sia.

On Nov. 17, Sia released "Everyday is Christmas" and it pleasantly fulfilled the holiday cheer hidden in every person. The album features 10 all encompassing songs (just like "Merry Christmas"). For years, Sia was just a songwriter for other artists like Rihanna and more. But since she began writing, producing and singing her own music, she has been on a winning streak and it does not seem like she'll stop. If anything, "Everyday Is Christmas" proves as such.

To take on a Christmas album can be repetitive and often boring, but Sia brings a new twist to seasonal albums. It is refreshing to hear an artist present an album with originality, delightful vocals and poise. One song everyone can agree upon is track number three, "Snowman." It is the first single off "Everyday Is Christmas." Sia sings of the down-sides of the holiday season when a person may not have a family to share the joy with. With her professing "please don't cry no tears it's Christmas, my snowman in me," in this she is refers to the holiday.

Because of this, it makes it east to appreciate the album wholeheartedly. The two songs that rank higher up on the list of upbeat songs are "Candy Cane Lane" and "Ho Ho Ho." They are the classic Christmas bops one would expect, but they are different from the classic, bemused songs the world is used to. She plays homage to those who love and adore Christmas, but can live without the stress of bearing through the holidays in "Ho Ho Ho." The song is catchy, easy to dance to and an instant



Photo Courtesy of **BILLBOARD**

classic. Through and through, Everyday is Christmas is filled with cheerful melodies and holiday melancholy.

Despite the album begin called "Everyday is Christmas," the song itself is not the best amongst the others. Nonetheless, it does make the album feel complete. With the lines in the chorus "Everyday is Christmas when you're here with me, everyday is Christmas with you by my side, you're my angel baby." Don't be mistaken, "Everyday is Christmas" is a wonderful song, it calls to be a song that is listened to throughout the year.

Track number six, "Puppies are Forever" is a peculiar song. It did not seem to be as Christmas or holiday like as the rest of the album, but it is easy to just skip and pretend the song does not exist. "Underneath the Christmas Lights" is eligible to be the song that replaces "Silent Night." Sia's vocal ability is at the highest peak without overdoing it. Not only that, but lyrically "Underneath the Christmas Lights" is the best on the album.

Sia showcases her song-writing talents and vocal abilities in "Underneath the Christmas Lights." Everything about "Everyday is Christmas" is almost perfection apart from a couple songs. From the melodies, to the lyrics, to the beats, to Sia's painstakingly amazing vocal capabilities. "Everyday is Christmas" is given a four out of five stars ranking for a seasonal album, but number one for the holiday albums for the past five years.



# SUSHI

Traditional Japanese cuisine is all the latest rage in major cities across America, including Omaha. Here are 5 of the metro-area's best sushi restaurants.



## BLUE SUSHI SAKE GRILL

Simone Davis  
staff writer

Omaha is filled with delicious food, and sushi is no exception. One of the most popular spots for sushi in the city is “Blue Sushi Sake Grill,” which has multiple locations throughout the city, the downtown one being the most popular.

The restaurant has a large venue in the old market with two levels. Both levels are vast and open so they can seat many people, as it is often busy. The top level has a red lighting, and it sets a nice mood if you're out eating dinner there at night. Not only is the venue nice and clean, but there is good service as well. The waiters and waitresses are very attentive and friendly. They also will explain anything that is on the menu if someone who has never had sushi is curious about a roll.

But the most important part of a restaurant is its food, and Blue's is delicious. There is a wide variety to choose from, ranging from raw sushi to cooked grill food. Whenever I visit Blue, I get their original “Blue Balls” which are fried pockets stuffed with crab and served with eel sauce. It is a nice balance of crunch from the pocket and softness and warmth from the crab. There is also a balance of sweet and savory, as the crab is very sweet and the eel sauce is salty. It comes with four of the pockets, and I eat it as an appetizer.

The two rolls that I get are the ‘California Roll’ and the “Shrimp Tempura Maki.” Both of these rolls aren't raw, and they are good starters for someone who has

never had sushi before and wants to start with something easy. The Cali Roll includes crab, avocado and cucumber. There are eight pieces, and it's pretty filling. If you add just a dot of wasabi onto the roll, it makes it more spicy and adds flavor. It's a pretty basic roll with not much to it, but again, for those who don't want to be too adventurous on their first visit or who simply don't like raw fish, it's a good choice.

The other roll that I usually order, Shrimp Tempura Maki is similar to the Cali Roll. The roll is filled with crab, cucumber, avocado, cream cheese and shrimp. Like the Cali Roll there are eight pieces, and the last two pieces of the roll have the shrimp tails in them. This roll is good, but it could be a little better. Sometimes when I order it, it seems that there is too much rice and not enough of anything else, but other times the balance is perfect. It may just depend on the chef at the time, but too much rice makes it taste like nothing. Whenever that happens, I usually just use more soy sauce than I would any other time to add extra flavor. But overall, the roll is tasty.

The best part about Blue is their happy hour. Happy hour in the Old Market location is from 3-6:30 on Monday through Saturday Friday and Saturday from 10:30-midnight and 12-8 on Sunday. Though only some of the menu is offered for Happy Hour, it significantly reduces the prices of the food.

With all things considered, Blue Sushi Sake Grill is a good restaurant for anyone who enjoys sushi or seafood and doesn't want to stretch their wallet to get it. I would rate Blue a 9/10.



ALEXIS BLANKENFELD | The Register

## KONA GRILL

Seh Na Mellick  
staff writer

A so-called multicultural fusion restaurant, Kona Grill intends to integrate cultural representation into their menu. In this case, the only culture that I encountered was a frequent trend of irreverence amongst the employees. While the food bordered mediocrity, the restaurant was ultimately incapable of compensating for its highly unprofessional staff.

The location and exterior of the building make it appear promising. Since it is situated on the outskirts of Village Pointe Mall in West Omaha, I was able to find and park with ease, even on a busy Saturday evening. The building is clean and refined, and the modern grey concrete provides an aesthetically pleasing contrast to the rustic lumber and brick-and-mortar anterior. The owners were wise in this regard, since the building is definitely capable of attracting patrons.

When I entered the building, I was greeted by three teenage hostesses. They were all sitting at the front desk, wore regular clothes (no uniform of any kind,) and disregarded customers as they scrolled through their Instagram feeds on their glittery, jewel-encrusted smartphones. I cleared my throat awkwardly and asked if I should seat myself. Two out of the three employees neglected to even divert their gaze from their phone screens, while the third told me to seat myself at the patio.

After a few attempts to find the patio amidst the crowded restaurant, I pulled out a wicker chair and

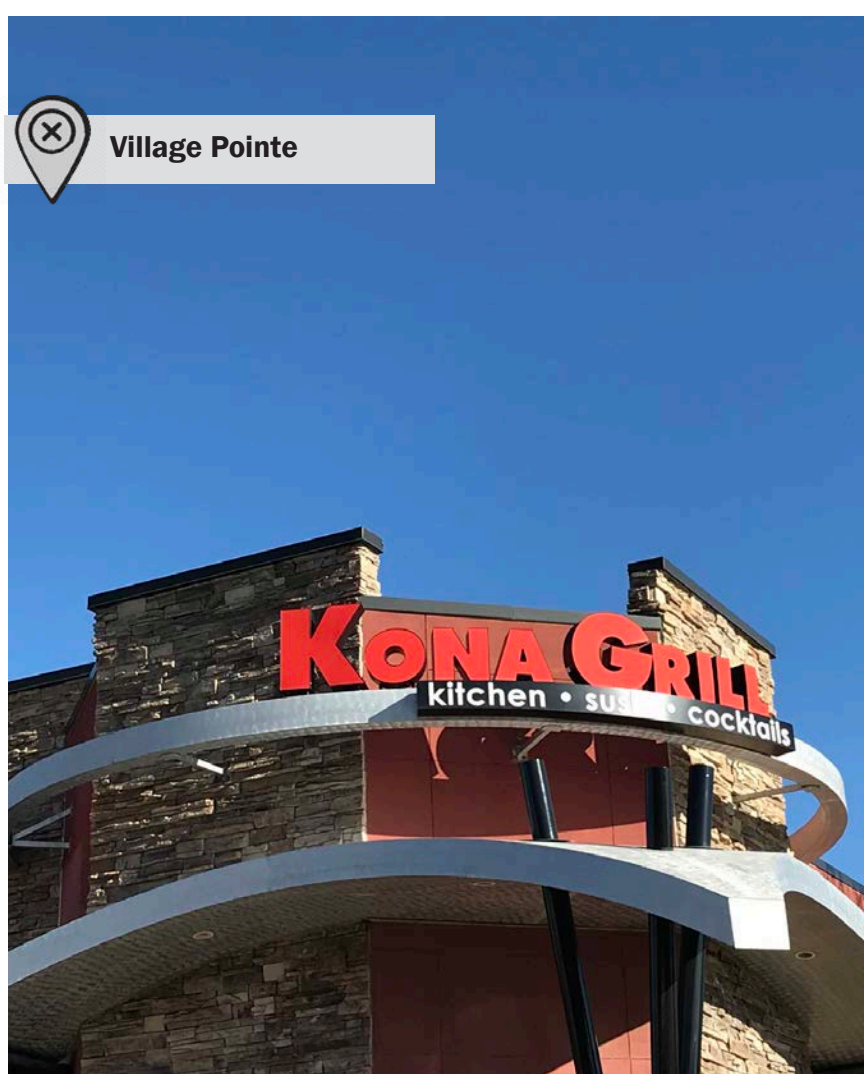
dragged it to the only vacant table. I had just sat down and laid my notebook onto a sticky wooden surface (that permeated my notebook pages,) when I realized that I lacked a menu. I asked a waitress who was passing by, and she replied that someone would be right out to serve me. It wasn't until twenty minutes later that someone finally asked for my drink order and gave me a menu. My server didn't return until 35 minutes later.

A few minutes before my order arrived, I was given a plate. But this was no normal plate; it had either been poorly washed by an incompetent employee, or it had not been washed at all. The yellowing crumbs and remnants of its last user were evident throughout the surface of the dish. That should have been my final warning signal, but nevertheless, I continued.

I began with the “Spicy Yellowtail” sushi roll, and I also ordered the Kona specialty “Sunshine” roll, along with miso soup. The “Spicy Yellowtail” roll is considered a classic, but Kona's recipe did not contain anything original. It tasted awfully bland, and with the combined muted aspects of cream cheese and yellowtail tuna, there was no additional flavor; it was reminiscent of a ball of mushy cardboard. There were no spices added, and the simplicity of the roll was not refreshing, as described on the menu.

The “Sunshine” roll and the miso soup (complimentary due to happy hour) was almost good enough to ease some of Kona's previous transgressions. The “Sunshine” roll contained a vibrant combination of spicy raw salmon, muted cream cheese, and

KONA GRILL on page 22



ALEXIS BLANKENFELD | The Register



## HIRO 88

**Simret Habte**  
staff writer

Hiro 88 is a sushi restaurant with four locations; one in Lincoln and three throughout Omaha. I went to their location at the Old Market. As we walked in the front door, we were greeted by a smiling host behind a desk who pointed out a seat. There's an obvious modern feel to the whole restaurant as seen in the light fixtures and other decorations.

One of the best parts of my time at Hiro was how amazing the service was. Beginning from the host to the waitress. They were all extremely polite. The waitress checked on our table pretty frequently and made sure everything we needed was taken care of. All of the food that was ordered came out quickly. I truly appreciated the way the waitress aid attention to what we needed. The servers and hosts cared about the people who came in or at the very least they were great at acting like they did.

The menu was all very appealing. There were a wide variety of options. We ordered the Fried Gyoza, Spicy Salmon, Asian Short Ribs, and Hiro's Crunch.

All of the food we ordered came to the table within fifteen minutes. I could tell the ingredients were fresh. The food was presented in an appetizing manner. I would personally recommend the Spicy Salmon roll. It's made with salmon, tempura crisp, and hot sauce. It was so good, I even debated ordering more.

The only downside of Hiro 88 was the price. As a high school student, the price of most of the food was a little steep to me. I ordered off of the Happy Hour menu. There were still plenty of delicious options on that menu that were a little more affordable. I particularly enjoyed the fried gyoza off of the appetizers. There were six amazing chicken and pork dumplings that were gone way too soon.

I wholeheartedly recommend Hiro 88. It's an amazing restaurant. Hiro has great options for all people with all types of tastes. It's a great place to hang out and get great sushi and more. The website boasts that it's a "hip venue for casual fine dining" and I couldn't agree more. While it's a little pricey, the food and experience is totally worth it.



3 metro area locations

Photo Courtesy of [OPENTABLE.COM](http://OPENTABLE.COM)



10th & Farnam St.

ALEXIS BLANKENFELD | The Register

**Anna Kaminski**  
editor-in-chief

Located in the historic Old Market, Matsu Sushi is an inconspicuous little sushi spot that supposedly has some of the best sushi in Omaha. When I first walked in, I immediately noticed the serenity and quiet throughout the restaurant - this is not to say they weren't busy, but the environment was extremely relaxed.

I was wowed by the vast selection on the menu with a significant amount of both vegetarian and regular sushi rolls. Not only were there numerous menu items, but each roll ranged in character and origin. For example I ordered a somewhat traditional Taro Maki roll that contained tobiko, masago, shrimp tempura, eel, spinach, asparagus, avocado, crab and cilantro. I also ordered the not-so-conventional Chili Philadelphia roll which con-

sisted of smoked salmon, jalapeño and cream cheese. Both of these rolls were absolutely incredible. They were both so unique and made me want to try nearly every roll on the menu.

In addition to wonderful food, the service was more than satisfactory and the bill will not make a dent in your wallet.

Matsu is the ideal sushi spot for a date night, for a night out with friends or family, what have you. It's located directly across the street from Gene Leahy mall and just a couple blocks from the hottest parts of the Old Market.

Living in a city that has so many restaurants, it is difficult to pick just one to be your favorite. Matsu Sushi's unique and extensive menu and inviting location contributes to the success and authenticity of the restaurant.

## MATSU SUSHI

## PONZU SUSHI AND GRILL

**Zoia Morrow**  
executive editor

The new after school meal, date night spot, cheap and fulfilling dish is sushi. It has always been popular, but now it's like its everywhere. As if everyone you know is eating sushi according to social media. While the Omahan sushi hotspots are Blue and Hiro 88, there are plenty of over restaurants that offer authentic Asian style sushi.

One of them being Ponzu Sushi and Grill. It is located in the heart of Askarben and offers a pleasing aesthetic to the optics. Walking inside instantly relaxes you because of its warm aura and color scale. Upon walking inside, the grill where the food is prepared is front and center, occupied by three cooks. There are two sides of Ponzu separated by a long sheer curtain and wall; one side being the bar and access to television and the other side being the two and four person tables. The restaurant is very modern and sleek.

On to what I ordered. I am a newcomer hopping on the sushi bandwagon. I had no idea what I wanted to order, so I asked my friends what's the best thing to try first. They all suggested something with shrimp or crab. I took their advice and now I am giving the same advice to everyone else. At Ponzu Sushi, servers came right away with complementary water. It gave me time to figure out what I wanted besides a Cali House Roll. First, a Cali House Roll is a sushi roll with crab, avocado, and cucumber. It was delightful, yet peculiar in my mouth. I don't try new foods very often and I'm not a huge fan of cucumber, but somehow, I liked the combination of crab, avocado, rice and cucumber. You get eight Cali rolls for six dollars, which is a fair deal because I thought it was quite fulfilling.

The second thing I ordered was the crispy shrimp. The Crispy Shrimp House Roll is tempura shrimp, unagi sauce and

cucumber. While you get six rolls seven dollars this time, the presentation is marvelous. Ponzu has the shrimp tails sticking out of two the rolls and he unagi sauce is decorated on top. My final course of the meal was the Opah Cabana Roll. It is crab mix, avocado, cream cheese and tempura scallion topped with opah and yuzi Ponzu sauce. It is ten dollars for eight rolls. Granted, it is a sushi restaurant and it was my first time, I had no clue it was raw salmon on top of the Opah. I absolutely hated Opah. I tried the sushi with and without soy sauce, but it just was not working for me. It tasted like slimy jello that has no flavor but then the cucumber came and it made it worse.

Though, my favorite part of Ponzu were the Asian Sticky Wings. They were delightful, hands down some of the best wings I have ever had. They are chicken wings with sweet and spicy sauce. They are laid upon white rice, topped with peanuts and green onion, served with thin carrot sticks on the side. They were cooked perfectly and soaked with sauce (which I love the most). The time I went it was midday, a bit after lunch time and service was fast, tables were open.

There are a variety of options on the sushi menu, but the downfall is, it was not split into what is raw and what is not. I could have ordered all raw sushi and I wouldn't know until I received my food. Still, I searched what some items meant to make sure.

If any Omahan ever wanted to try sushi beyond Blue and Hiro, Ponzu Sushi and Grill is the perfect place. It is a relaxed area in a popular part of Omaha that modern with its menu and restaurant. The prices are affordable for a date, an after-school snack or party go-to. While I'm new to the world of sushi, Ponzu served as a great start. I probably won't be the person who gets sushi every week, but now I can say I've had it. I give Ponzu a 7/10 rating.



Aksarben

ZOIA MORROW | The Register



# New WWII call of duty game executed well, best title thus far

**CALL OF DUTY** from page 19

ing production to fit the annual release of the newest "Call of Duty" title. With amazing graphics, a gripping story and balanced game modes, "WWII" set new expectations for future titles in the franchise.

"WWII" is rich with historical context.

The game's campaign (story mode) plays through America's involvement in WWII. Starting with D-Day, the campaign offers perspective on the intensity and brutality of the war. Sledgehammer did a really good job of mixing up the pacing of the storyline. Protagonist Private Red Daniels experiences the horrors of the battlefield, all while trying to keep a level head and follow his orders. With authority figures butting heads and the constant threat of Nazi attacks, he struggles to hold onto his morale.

Character development was clearly a huge priority for Sledgehammer. The secondary characters hold a lot of depth, making the campaign all the more interesting. The cinematic presentation makes this "Call of Duty" campaign one of the most memorable to date. Sledgehammer also did an amazing job with selecting voice actors. Every moment in the

campaign feels authentic and immersive due to the insanely talented voice work.

The campaign is fantastic, but isn't the only aspect of "WWII" that deserves recognition. In addition to a story mode, the game features a multiplayer experience and a Nazi Zombies mode. Multiplayer is an essential part of every "Call of Duty" title, and the game's replay value is often influenced by how well this mode is executed. "WWII" uses the same mechanics as "Advanced Warfare" when it comes to gameplay, which has been annoying to some. However, the general consensus is that "WWII" will need time to fix the initial kinks. Every "Call of Duty" game has a period of experimentation with its player base so that developers can receive feedback and fix any issues after the game's launch. With a little adjustment, "WWII" multiplayer mode would be nearly perfect. The only major issues affecting gameplay as of right now are weapon balancing and server difficulties. This is normal for a newly-released shooting game, and will hopefully be dealt with in the next few months.

Nazi Zombies is a fresh take on a game mode first in-

troduced with "Call of Duty: World at War". Sledgehammer focused on ramping up the horror/paranormal aspect of this mode, going in a different direction than previous games. The "Call of Duty: Black Ops" mini franchise had their own exceptional zombie mode, but shied away from the Nazi involvement aspect as they progressed the underlying storyline. "WWII" begins its own zombies story arc, which includes a slew of interesting new characters, and enemies. The story finds its roots in an occult, dark science-esque niche. The actual gameplay is significantly more difficult compared to previous incarnations, and adds a survival-horror game feel with the jump scares and an eerie score. Over all, it seems like a very promising mode with a high replay value. With all this said, it is still early for "WWII" to be reviewed in its entirety. Time is still needed to adjust the game based on player reception and feedback, but will eventually become one of the best-executed "Call of Duty" titles so far. Sledgehammer's reputation has been renewed, and fans are impressed. The next few months will reveal how much effort they are willing to put into maintaining their newest title.

## DC comic movie plot disappoints fans, lack of exciting characters

**JUSTICE LEAGUE** from page 19

going to be destroyed and none of them seem to be interested in stopping the villain's plan. This is also what causes the boredom, as the lines suck all tension and intrigue from the film.

The film's direction and lighting is by

far the strong point, with almost every shot being gorgeous and every character well represented by the area they inhabit in the frame. However, very few of these shots form coherent scenes, with the director opting to create interesting moments instead

of impactful and entrancing clips. These moments, though interesting, are awkward to sit through and drags the film down even more.

"Justice League" overall is a heavy handed and boring movie with a dull plot

whose characters are dumb and awkward and deliver awkward dialogue and show no interest in the world around them, though the film is gorgeous. I give "Justice League" a C-

## Kona grill only impresses aesthetically

**KONA GRILL** from page 20

shaved lemon. It had an intriguing and addicting flavor with the squishy texture of raw fish and the chewy consistency of intentionally over-zested lemon zest. The savory and slightly salty taste of the miso soup broth complemented the recessive flavors of seaweed, scallion, and tofu. Although it has a thin and runny consistency, Kona's miso soup has a heavy flavor.

After I had finished eating, the wait staff offered me a complimentary dessert due to all the inconveniences that occurred during their service. I was appreciative of their, albeit delayed, kindness, and accepted the slice of carrot cake that they offered me. Unfortunately, however, the cake was dry and scratched my throat, and the cream cheese frosting had hardened into unappetizing clumps.

Humorously, Kona's attempt to compensate for their amateur mistakes was yet another amateur mistake.

For the unprofessionalism and discourtesy of the employees, I award Kona with one out of four stars for service. Also, although the "Sunshine" roll and the miso soup were both delicious, the "Spicy Yellowtail" roll and the carrot cake were unsatisfactory, therefore invoking me to rate Kona's food with 2 out of four stars.

Ultimately, my experience with Kona Grill was notable, but I would be more likely to repeat it in my nightmares than in real life. Thus, if you ever find yourself attracted to Kona's chic appearance, it would be best to bring your camera, not your appetite.



Photo Courtesy of YELP.COM

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### Clashing opinions on the legalization of sex work

Two students give their varying opinions on the legalization of sex work in the United States.

PAGE 25

### The importance of educating about mental illnesses

Mental illnesses affect at least 25 percent of the American population, yet there is not enough awareness or knowledge on the subject.

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### Photo Essay

As fall ends, The Register displays a photo essay of sports, activities and clubs at Central.

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# opinion

## THE REGISTER

Vol. 133 No. 3 | December 14, 2017

# #NoKXL

Due to the Keystone XL Pipeline's close proximity, the issue has been a major point of concern recently.

Vasili Sgourakis  
staff writer

At the forefront of political controversy, especially in Nebraska, is the construction of the Keystone XL oil pipeline. A planned 1,179 mile pipeline running from the sands of Alberta, Canada, to Steele City, Nebraska, to join an existing pipe. Those in favor of the pipeline see it as a low risk action that will provide economic stability and increase jobs.

While it is true that jobs would increase during the construction of this pipeline, they would only be temporary. A State Department analysis concluded that building the pipeline would have created 42,000 momentary jobs that would represent less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the nation's total employment.

Moreover, construction of this pipeline would further cement our continued reliance on non-renewable energy sources. Construction of the Keystone XL pipeline would increase dependence on fossil fuels, and accelerate more drilling for the dirtiest oil on the planet. Tar Sands oil is the most polluting kind of oil, carrying 11 times more sulfur and nickel, 6 times more nitrogen and 5 times more lead than conventional crude oil. These facts should make the prospect of a spill even more frightening.

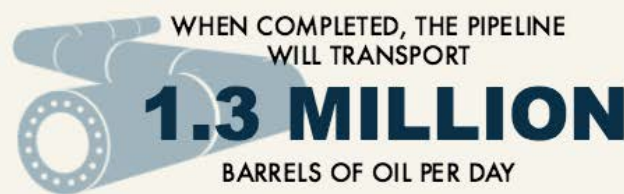
Instead of using temporary job creation as a reason to transport oil, we should focus on increasing clean energy usage. Increasing wind turbine and solar panel construction across the country could provide a spike in job creation and prove no detriment to the environment. The United States should instead demonstrate a commitment to reduce oil consumption by increasing fuel efficiency standards, renewable energy and environmentally sustainable biofuels.

Taking these steps rather than reinforcing a dependence on oil whose extraction is a detriment to the environment would put the United States at the forefront of environmental awareness. Though unlikely given the current administrations blindness to future generations and green awareness, this begins with rejection of the Keystone XL pipeline.

Although President Trump has claimed that the pipeline will provide further economic stability because of his pledge to only use American steel, the pipeline will rely heavily on foreign materials. TransCanada, the company that will build the pipeline, has said that U.S. materials will be used for roughly

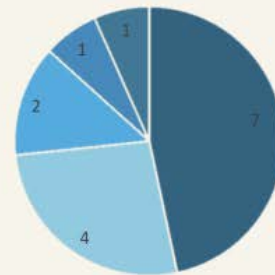
## PIPELINE PROBLEMS

Proposed in 2005, the Keystone XL pipeline is a 36-inch-diameter crude oil pipeline, stretching from Alberta, Canada to Steele City, Nebraska.



THE **42,000** TEMPORARY JOBS CREATED BY KEYSTONE WILL ONLY ACCOUNT FOR **1/10 OR 1%** OF UNITED STATES UNEMPLOYMENT

SINCE 2010, KEYSTONE PIPELINES HAVE SPILLED **14** TIMES



- 10 GALLONS OR LESS
- 100 GALLONS OR LESS
- BETWEEN 400 AND 500 GALLONS
- 21,000 GALLONS
- 210,000 GALLONS

XL PIPELINE WILL STRETCH ACROSS **1,179 MILES** OF THE US AND CANADA



CORA BILLIG | Contributing Graphic Artist

half of the American portion of the project, the rest will be made in Canada, Italy, and India.

The Keystone XL pipeline is a hasty solution to a larger problem. While some say that it will lessen reliance on oil from the Middle East, we will still be victim to the same high gas prices and oil prices set by a global market, not by Canada or any other single country. If one is genuinely concerned with our continued dependency on foreign energy interests, a complete solution would be an increase in development and research of renewable energy.

TransCanada, the company tasked with construction of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline also built the Keystone pipeline which spilled nearly 210,000 gallons of oil in the middle of November this year. The spill occurred southeast of Amherst, a small town in northeast South Dakota. The

pipeline has had smaller spills in the same region in 2011 and 2016.

Despite these points, state regulators from Nebraska approved the project shortly after hearing news of the spill from the Keystone pipeline. However, the regulators rejected the preferred route through Nebraska, approving the project only on an alternate path by which TransCanada has not decided whether to continue.

As a Nebraskan, this is especially alarming. The potential Keystone XL pipeline could cause harm to the ecologically delicate Sandhills region and a main proponent of water, the Ogallala aquifer. A temporary increase in jobs and a false pretense of less reliance on the middle east does not justify a pipeline that proves to be an environmental risk and is empty of qualities that will benefit every day Nebraskans.

# American citizens in danger of infringement of First Amendment rights

Tyler Zipay  
contributing writer

There is a growing effort by powerful forces in the United States to limit Americans' First Amendment rights. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees all citizens freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, freedom of religion and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. The former three freedoms; speech, assembly, and press, are currently coming under extreme pressure from the government and the mainstream media.

Recently there has been much discussion about freedom of speech on college campuses. One opinion contributor from "Vox," Robert C. Post, has even gone as far as to say that First Amendment rights shouldn't even apply on college campuses. Colleges and universities are supposed to educate students about the

**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.**

The United States Constitution

role of government. By restricting freedom of speech on campuses, colleges would be teaching students that the job of the government is to stifle controversial opinions and tell us what to think instead of letting citizens form their own opinions. The founders envisioned a nation where the people tell the government

what to do, not vice versa.

College are also supposed to teach students how to be independent, critically-thinking citizens capable of being members of a democratic society. Unfortunately, today, many think the role of higher education is to force certain ideas upon students and not allow them to be exposed to ideas that aren't "politically correct." By doing so colleges would create a generation of Americans incapable of thinking for themselves and dependent upon higher authority.

This is not how a democratic society should work. If citizens, in their most intellectually critical years especially, cannot be exposed to new and controversial ideas and cannot form their own opinions, society will never progress. The citizenry would be ever more vulnerable to the cold, iron grip of authoritarian ideology and be further led down the path of giving up individual rights to centralized authority. As American citizens proud

of the rights and liberties endowed to us by the Constitution, many people are fearful that the institution of American higher education will morph into not a place where students are educated, but one where they are indoctrinated to support the government's agenda.

"If the freedom of speech is taken away, then, dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter." -George Washington.

Just as startling as the push for restrictions on the freedom of speech is the buildup of government power aimed at discouraging protests. In 2015 the NYPD deployed a new unit that is part of the larger Counter-Terrorism Task Force; the Strategic Response Group. The SRG is a group of 350 officers equipped with long rifles with the goal of "dealing with events like our recent protests or incidents like Mumbai or what just happened in Paris," according to NYPD commissioner Bill Bratton referring to the protests in New York City as a

FIRST AMENDMENT on page 26



# Homework tracks students' progress, should count as grade

Seh Na Mellick  
staff writer

Each quarter, kids by the hundreds line up to celebrate their academic achievements at honor roll assemblies. Meanwhile, proud parents stand by and assume that their offspring must be a stellar embodiment of Central's tradition of excellence. But nothing is as it seems.

It appears that, lately, schools have begun to advocate a lack of effort inside and outside of the classroom. The education system's method of honoring distinguished students has become increasingly exclusive towards condescending geniuses who, despite a lack of work ethic, manage to achieve good grades.

The current grading system is flawed because it allows teachers to assign homework that will have absolutely no impact on students' grades. This is quite inconvenient for students because, oftentimes, their grades will depend solely on assessments.

A junior at Central said that, "...I work extremely hard on my math homework- at least an hour every night- but since the homework doesn't count [towards my grade], I have to add a ton of pressure on myself to do well on tests, which are stressful already, especially since I don't perform well under testing conditions."

An honor-roll senior added, "... I really wish that my English teacher would include homework in the final grade because some people never do the homework and just show up, take the tests, and finish the class with an A. They get the same (or higher) grade as some students who do all the homework, even though they did not contribute anything outside of school."

Even though tests are the best way of gauging a student's knowledge of the material, homework is the best way of gauging a student's dedication to the class.

Although effort (which is reflected through completion of homework) is probably not as important as understanding (which is reflected through test scores,) it should still be taken into account when determining the final grade for a report card. Otherwise, an unfair conflict occurs where irresponsible students are rewarded for their negligence.

If homework was to be included in final grades, it could not only demonstrate commitment, but it could also offset the balance of low test scores. This provides alternative opportunities for hardworking students to be successful, while also causing irresponsible students to be held accountable for their behavior.

Others may argue that homework is detrimental to education; they claim that it induces stress that may negatively affect performance. In actuality, tests are arguably way more stressful than homework, because homework is made to help students comprehend the material, and is not made to cause stress.

An honor-roll sophomore noted, "...homework isn't really all that stressful compared to quizzes and tests if you know how to manage it. I would much rather have homework assignments compared to quizzes and tests because assessments are usually more stressful and unpredictable."

Ultimately, countless hours of after school assignments and studying should not be disregarded. Thus, homework should be accounted for in the grade.



BIRDY SCHEPPER | Contributing Cartoonist

## Millennials often shamed, grouped with new generations

Zoia Morrow  
executive editor

Millennials are ruining the housing industry. Eight reasons why millennials seem to be lazy at work. Five industries millennials are 'killing.' Five really good reasons to hate millennials. These are actual headlines from trustee news sites written by baby boomers and Generation X blaming all the world's problems on millennials. But who are the millennials the media is blaming exactly? There are 75 million millennials in America, which is a large part of the country's population. Generation Y, often called millennials, are the 23 to 37-year-olds born from 1980 to 1994.

From 1995 to 2012 is Generation Z. There are 23 million people whom are a part of Generation Z. My generation isn't even considered to be millennials, yet we continuously get grouped into one large spanning generation for the media to use as their punching bag. Combined, millennials and Generation Z make up 98 million Americans and are on track to replace the baby boomers. The fact millennials alone have surpassed baby boomers as the

largest generation should say something in itself.

The media tends to blame millennials for ruining industrial industries that do not pertain to us. As if we were all responsible for the housing market crash in 2008 because we were not buying houses. Older generations, more specifically, Generation X, are angry at the way we must handle the predicaments their generation has bestowed upon us. They are upset less people want to pursue a higher education beyond high school. They are upset some millennials are 19 and 20-years-old and living at home. They are upset millennials are not rushing to mortgage a house. They are upset because millennials prefer to start domestic living when they are in their late 20s to early 30s. They do not understand that life is much harder now.

Millennials and gen z have planned their lives and are planning their lives around the world today. The world that has been shaped by the actions from baby boomers. They are not in a rush to mortgage because the average American mortgage is \$190 thousand and a thousand per month (not including utilities). Even then, 10 percent of homes have a monthly cost of three thousand. Americans hold \$10 trillion in mortgage debt on family residences. Baby

boomers and gen z do not realize that independence is a staple value for millennials. While I do not speak on behalf of all millennials, I can say they are given the worst reputation. There are individuals whom are a part of Generation Y and Z that completely disagree with the typical millennial notions. When I say 'we' or 'us' I mean gen y and z because why not? We are already clumped together by the media.

It's really shameful the media fixates on blaming newer generations for crashing markets and why the world is the way it is. Even now, if one were to read this article, they are probably thinking I am complaining and being overdramatic. I am just tired of older generations calling us spoiled, entitled and dragging 90 some million people's lives through the dirt because they can't comprehend simple concepts and we are doing things differently than them.

It's time older generations open their minds and eyes to the future of America rather than judging us, speaking on behalf of us, and most of all, putting us down instead of believing in our capabilities. I mean did they really think they world would evolve on their way of thinking?

## Socio-economic status plays larger role in success than hard work

Hard work is admirable, but unfortunately, it's not what gets people ahead in life. The popular Republican sentiment that people down on their luck just need to "pull themselves up by the bootstraps" is unrealistic and quite honestly selfish.

Those who say that are often times wealthy individuals who come from affluent backgrounds. It's not obvious to them that some people don't have the opportunities that they have which led to their success. Success is a truly just luck. It's made obvious beginning from school. Some people will have an easier time at school and getting jobs simply because of the family they were born into.

Certain neighborhoods have better public schools with a lot more government funding while others are still using textbooks from the 1950s. The kids at those schools are more likely to have a stable

home with parents who emphasize the importance of an education.

Other, less fortunate students regardless of how much time and effort they put into their work will not get the same quality of education. They will not have the same



SIMRET HABTE  
SIMMER DOWN

opportunities take college admissions exams or find scholarships so that they are able to get a degree and a high paying job.

This lack of resources continues a vicious cycle that's been going on forever.

The only people that have been given the tools for success throughout history (proper education, money, support) are wealthy white men. Not surprisingly, they are also the ones who have the 'pull yourself up' mentality.

Those beliefs are held by people with a lot of power in this country. They're governors, senators supreme court justices, even presidents. These people control legislature and funding for programs that are vital for the less fortunate. The lack of understanding from them impacts the lives of those that are poor, people of color, women, or others that are disadvantaged. Their decisions are based on their own desires for even more money and power because they don't see the hardships of being underprivileged. Senators who have never had

to worry about paying for healthcare slash funding to affordable clinics. They unequally distribute funds to schools in high income neighborhoods.

Their actions force the people that are hurt to stay in the same neighborhoods and jobs that will indefinitely keep them in a disadvantaged situation. The privilege that comes with wealth and status can blind someone from seeing the disadvantages that those without that same privilege face. All this isn't to say that hard work is useless.

I just think that it is unfair to say that a rich white guy from West Omaha and a woman of color from a low income neighborhood have equal footing in life. I think there should be an understanding that hard work doesn't really mean anything without the resources to complement it.



# Pro vs. Con: SEX WORK

**PRO:**  
Prostitution is a viable lifestyle, no lack of emotional connection

Emma Whaley  
staff writer

Sex work. It's probably the most uncomfortable subject anyone could put in a high school newspaper. But there's no reason for something that is so ingrained in human beings to be shoved away into allies and the dirty part of the Internet. Sex work can include prostitution, stripping and porn. Most of it is illegal or highly regulated, and while there should be certain regulations, the illegality and certain "precautions" can be harmful to the men and women in the multibillion dollar industry.

For being the world's oldest profession, prostitution is surrounded by taboo. Chimpanzees, capuchin monkeys and Adélie penguins all exchange sex for things like food and nesting material. Many leading human rights' organizations support decriminalization of prostitution, including the World Health Organization, Human Rights Watch and UNAIDS. Right now, prostitution is completely illegal in most of the world, including the United States in every state but Nevada. In the Nordic model, in place in much of the Netherlands, buyers who are caught are charged, but not sellers. The US should decriminalize prostitution in all states. However, it should not be legalized.

When prostitution is legalized, it can be taxed heavily and unreasonable regulations can be placed on the workers.

Decriminalization of prostitution can protect the workers and their families. Even in the Nordic model, brothels are completely illegal. Because of this, workers are at risk of landlords evicting them and their families for fear of being prosecuted as a brothel. The medical journal *The Lancet* claimed that decriminalization "would have the greatest effect on the course of HIV epidemics across all settings, averting 33-46 percent of HIV infections in the next decade. Such a move would also reduce mistreatment of sex workers and increase their access to human rights, including health care."

Stripping and other erotic dancing is much more legal. There are about four thousand strip clubs in the US. Everyone has heard of someone who's stripping their way through college. As it turns out, a third of strippers really are paying their way through higher education. Strippers' earnings vary from shift to shift, so salary depends on night, location, and how many times per week they work. Some women in this branch of the sex work industry see stripping as a form of feminist empowerment, and it should be seen as that. Self-proclaimed feminist stripper Antonia Crane believes that the men who go to her club are mostly there to seek a connection that doesn't have emotional attachments and that it can be an emotionally helpful experience. She said, "I have, many times, felt like the more powerful and needed one in that context." It's one of the problems with feminism today. Some "feminists" claim that the empowerment is meant to encourage women to take up traditionally masculine jobs and throw away seemingly sexist careers like sex work. In reality, women should feel empowered enough to do things like sex work because they honestly want to.

Pornography may be the most used form of sex work. Yet, it's treated as something to be shoved away and hidden. While there aren't very many consequences for those who consume porn, the men and women who make the videos are strictly regulated. Most of the regulations are good; porn stars are routinely given health check-ups and policies are put in place to ensure their boundaries are respected. However, other state-issued regulations can be harmful to the actors' career. Proposition 60 was a ballot proposition in California. The proposition would allow the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration to prosecute workers and firms anytime a condom is not visible in a porn film. The proposition would have allowed California citizens to sue pornographers and receive their personal information. Excessive law suits, actor safety and the taxes it would take to enforce it caused Proposition 60 to not pass, but by the thin margin of about eight percent.

If that proposition had passed, it would have been very detrimental to the industry and everyone who works in it. If pornographers were allowed to just make their films, the workers would be much better off and would never worry about having their personal information in the open. Sex work, while often seen as dirty and obscene, is the source of work for thousands of men and women. Those men and women should be respected as much as anyone, regardless of the nature of their profession. For many women, sex work is empowering and a way to express feminism. This writer chooses to side with Amnesty International, saying sex workers' rights are human.

**CON:**  
Sex work encourages male superiority, cycles of human trafficking

Sydney Prescott  
staff writer

Most people are able to rationalize sex work and the products that come from it. Whether they call it empowering feminism or a job that pays well, it is still wrong to show or do something that can harmfully affect the brain, result in sex-trafficking, and promote male dominance.

Many call prostitution the oldest profession in the world. False. According to the Bible, people were first farmers, as Adam and Eve first tended the garden of Eden. Later, once sin had entered the world, prostitution came about. Although prostitution may have been one of the first jobs, it is wrong and has many unintended consequences. Women in street prostitution are 60-100 times more likely to be murdered than non-prostitutes, 95 percent were sexually assaulted in childhood, 89 percent of prostitutes would like to leave, and 68 percent meet criteria for PTSD, according to Prostitutionresearch.com. Prostitution is dangerous and should be considered wrong and illegal in our society.

Multiple organizations claim that decriminalizing prostitution would help end sex trafficking, rape, and STDs, but this is untrue. In fact, since so much criminal activity happens in places where prostitution occurs, decriminalizing it would allow many criminal businesses like sex trafficking and drug trading to flourish. According to the "Trafficking in Humans Report" by the US, "Where prostitution is tolerated, there is a greater demand for human trafficking victims and nearly always an increase in the number of women and children trafficked into commercial sex slavery." In terms of stopping the spread of STDs, decriminalization would not be effective. For example, even if decriminalization gave prostitutes the opportunity to get checked out weekly for HIV, it would not be effective.

This is because they would still test negative for up to 12 weeks, expose many other customers before finding out and that is if the prostitute quits after testing positive. This would not be an affective way to stop HIV. Instead abolishing prostitution would be much more affective in stopping the spread of sexual diseases.

Many feminists claim that being a stripper allows them to feel empowered to be a woman. But instead it creates the culture of men superiority. That men can get anything they want with some money and a little coercion.

For example, men before they get married, go to bachelor parties at strip clubs to celebrate the freedom of being an unbound man before being "stuck" with the women they are choosing to marry. Men go to these parties expecting to be sexually aroused by some other women. Sexual arousal should only be saved for their spouses. Instead they take the freedom of looking and possible touching a young women's body, allowing them to use another human being for their own selfish gain. Although being a stripper may feel empowering, it only adds to the anti-feministic culture. 40 million American people regularly visit porn sites. One fourth of all internet searches are related to pornography. 79 percent of teens are exposed to internet porn before 18 years of age, according to Covenanteyes.com and Webroot.com.

All these statistics show that porn may be taboo, but despite this, porn is widely used. And yet it is completely wrong to watch sex and things that create sexual arousal, according to God's word. It not only is morally wrong, but can also have large physical, mental, and emotional consequences. Physically, a person can lose their jobs, friends, money, and family by using porn. Mentally, porn is akin to drugs in the medical field, and the more a person watches it grey matter in the brain is destroyed every hour by watching pornography. The grey matter in the brain allows for movement, speech, memories, decision making, etc., and is also known to be destroyed by smoking, drinking, and doing drugs. Emotionally, it causes anxiousness, depression, and disconnection. The people looking at it will forever compare their experiences and their partners body to an image on the screen. Although pornography may seem gratifying, it does not satisfy the need for intimate relationships and it connects the person watching to a nonliving piece of media. Sex, and things that arouse sexual desire, were not made to be watched by other people, it was made to create an intimate bond between husband and wife through physical pleasure.

Sex work hurts the workers, the purchasers, and the community. In order for this to stop, I believe that our culture needs to recognize that true fulfilling joy does not come from people or images, but from God.



JULIAN HOCK-BEATY | The Register



# Despite wide range of views, to win, Democratic Party must compromise

## Split ideals within Democratic Party embarrassing

Molly Ashford  
staff writer

The American political system has been plagued with vexatious, irreversible party divides since its colonial beginning; a divided nation is hardly a new concept for this struggling country. Any attempt to mend the disastrous relations between the Democratic and Republican parties are seemingly hopeless, and amidst the cataclysmic responses to Donald Trump's presidency, new divisions within the Democratic party have become more apparent on a surface level.

It is easy to see the varying levels of progressivism represented by people who label themselves as Democrats. The ultimate recent Democratic divide came from Hillary Clinton versus Bernie Sanders supporters. The primary election showcased the reluctance of some Democrats, namely Clinton supporters, to back a candidate such as Sanders who held such progressive policies that seem rather unrealistic due to the current political compass in the House and Senate.

These moderate Democrats are the type who campaign on the idea of working across the aisle; crossing party lines to compromise. While some moderately liberal politicians may have more progressive ideas on their own, they set them aside in order to cooperate with Republicans, who hold the majority in every branch of government.

There is a certain advantage to this bipartisan way of thinking, as many Republicans and Democrats who tend to have a more middle-of-the-road political approach claim that it is the most efficient way to get things done.

Many important votes have been made by self-proclaimed bipartisan efforts, although bipartisanship has such a faulty definition that a vote can be considered so if, for example, only one Democrat votes yes on a Republican bill.

Hence, where there is a pro, there is always a con: bi-partisanship is often seen in a rather unflattering light. The New York Times referring to it as "a way of eliminating the few differences between the parties and forcing Democrats, even when they are in power, to continue to embrace Republican governing approaches."

This is exactly why the more progressive branches of the Democratic party tend to reject the idea of bipartisanship: they believe that progress cannot be met by compromise, but instead, by pushing through the barriers put up by Republicans.

There has been a recent surge in this progressivism in the aftermath of the 2016 election, proven by the recent Democratic wins in the off-year gubernatorial and legislative elections just a few months back.

To bring it down to a more human level instead of focusing solely on elected officials, the differing ideas within Democratic constituents on how to deal with Trump boasts the implications of this divide.

While moderates believe that cooperating with Trump and attempting to work with him and his party is one way to counteract his neuroses, a growing number of more liberal Democrats would much rather reject his presidency than attempt to compromise with him.

And honestly, it seems that we have reached a point in this presidency where compromise with Trump is an unfathomable idea. The American political system has become more than divided in the wake of such a rogue president, it has become polarized.

The polarity between Republicans and Democrats is at a level that Democrats cannot reach if they have any hope for defeating the Republican house and senate majority next year, much less regaining the presidency in 2020.

Negative campaigning between two Democratic candidates only serves to further divide a party that is already badly damaged beneath the surface of unanimous hatred of Trump.

Democrats have historically run on a platform of equity and togetherness, but recent division has showcased the unwillingness to compromise within a party that desperately needs harmony. Without unification, there is the possibility of another disastrous election such as 2016.

Complete political unity is seemingly inscrutable in the current day, but despite their differences, moderate and progressive democrats alike must try to create an energized party in hopes of sweeping success in 2018 and 2020.



CONNOR PAINTIN | Contributing Cartoonist

## Democratic party growing from youth, pragmatism

Malcolm Durfee O'Brien  
staff writer

Prior to 2016, the Democratic Party was the Party of unity in the face of the Republican Party's moderate and Tea Party split. It was the Party of moderation in the face of rising political extremism.

It was the Party of leadership of ideas in the face of a new type of politics that aims only to oppose the ideas of others. Then came the 2016 Presidential Primary election and the roof of the Party caved in thanks to the war of words and character between Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. This division has started to seem unsolvable, even as the Party forms their policy to defeat Donald Trump. So then begs the questions, how does the Democratic Party solve their split? How do they unify their message? How do they win back their old base? Well, the answer is sitting in Virginia.

The Democratic Primary for Governor of Virginia was held concurrently with the Republican Primary on Jun. 13. This primarily serves as a reflection of the Presidential Primaries, with Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam being a representation of Hillary Clinton's campaign and former Congressman Tom Perriello representing the Sanders campaign. The two brutally attacked each other in debates and campaign ads, again like the Presidential campaign and animosity was clearly growing between the two major candidates' supporters and the men themselves. On the night of the primary, it became obvious that Northam would win and by a comparable margin to Hillary Clinton's victory over Bernie Sanders, showing this to be yet another reflection of the Democratic war between Clinton and Sanders. Something

changed after the

Primary, unlike with the Democratic Primary which saw Senator Sanders cling on for dear life well after his chances of victory had evaporated and likely caused Secretary Clinton to expend excess resources on defeating Sanders. Tom Perriello immediately and enthusiastically endorsed Ralph Northam after his defeat and sent a message telling his supporters to vote for Northam and Democratic candidates in the state's various races. In the end, the general election saw Northam win the governorship by the largest margin for a Democrat in Virginia since 1985. Democrats also destroyed the Republican supermajority in the House of Delegates with their set of ideologically and culturally diverse candidates.

What does this mean then? It means that the best way to unify the Democratic Party is indeed the most obvious one, combine the two styles of Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. Clinton's pragmatism combined with the youthful energetic support of Bernie Sanders is an unstoppable combination and one that can easily be achieved. The races for the Statehouse saw the Democrats field the most diverse candidates in the history of Virginia, with half of them being women, most of them being below the age of 45 and a large amount being non-white, this drew out the ultra-liberal Bernie Sanders supporters, while

Clinton supporters were attracted to the Democratic candidates by their pragmatic and realistic styles and messages. This style also drew out moderate independent voters who were tired of their Representatives constantly waging a culture war against gays, women and transgender people. Virginia is the site of the Democratic Party's way forward, a way forward by adapting aesthetics.

## Authority figures toe dangerous lines by equating protests to terrorism

FIRST AMENDMENT from page 23  
result of the NYPD's killing of Eric Garner.

Equating protesters exercising their freedom of assembly with terrorists is absolutely ridiculous, and it is a step on the dangerous path to the total elimination of the right to express dissenting opinions. By using these tactics the NYPD is systematically discouraging dissent and villainizing protesters. It promotes the idea that dissenters are dangerous, like terrorists, and the general population must be "protected" from them and their message.

This is also part of the larger trend of the militarization of local police forces. The Department of Defense has given local police forces \$4.3 billion worth of military-grade equipment for free since the 1990s. States have also received at least \$34 billion in federal grants to purchase military equipment. The Department of Homeland Security in recent years has spent as much as \$75 billion annually on arming local police with military-grade munitions and on infrastructure such as "anti-terrorism fences." The rapid increase in local police departments' firepower in recent years is alarming by itself, but doubly so when their assault rifles are in the vicinity of

Americans simply expressing their opinions.

Another frightening example of the effort to restrict First Amendment rights a provision in The Nation Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, called the "Countering Disinformation and Propaganda Act." The 2017 NDAA was signed by President Barack Obama on Dec. 23, 2016. The provision allows for numerous government agencies including the State Department, CIA, Board of Broadcasting Governors, and others, to collude to crack down on whatever media the federal government deems to be foreign propaganda or "fake news." It also established a fund for private groups and journalists to produce propaganda that supports the government's agenda.

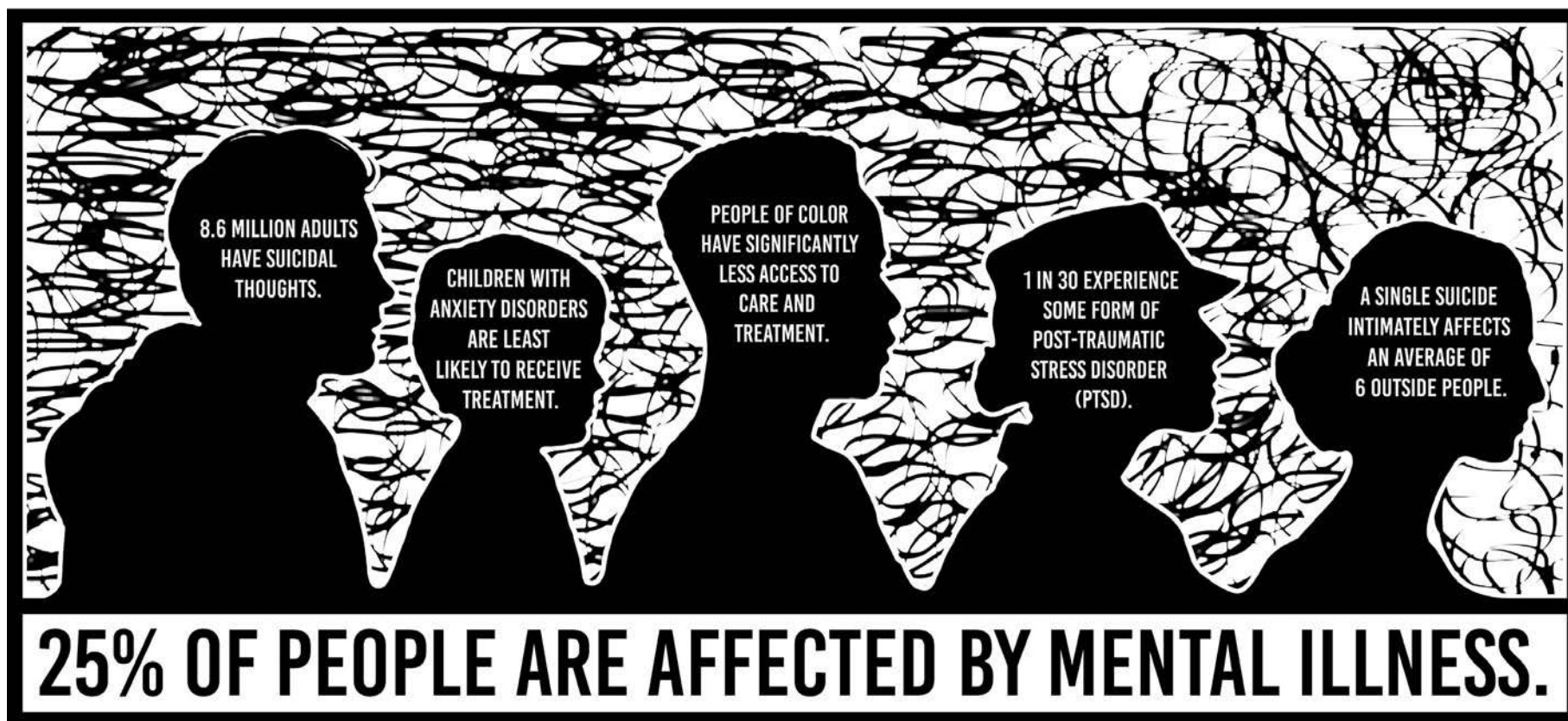
This is very troubling because it gives the federal government the power to censor the press according to its own political or diplomatic aspirations. The government can now label and rogue media outlet that opposes its agenda, maybe even this one, as propaganda or fake news and eliminate its content from the marketplace of ideas. It is a direct infringement upon the freedom of the press. Under U.S. law, journalists no longer have true freedom to express their ideas and could, under a more tyrannical regime, be forced to make their opinions con-

form to the national agenda. This provision creates the legal basis for the U.S. government to form its own "Ministry of Truth" as portrayed in George Orwell's dystopian novel 1984.

This provision is not only an infringement on basic rights, but is totally unnecessary. As citizens of a democracy, we the people have both the right and the responsibility to discriminate between different sources of information. Today, more than ever, Americans are capable of making their own judgments on the credibility of information. With the vast amount of data available on the internet and public libraries in all of our cities, the citizens have the necessary tools and resources to distinguish fact from fallacy whether or not it serves the interests of those in power in the United States.

We the people must stand up against these injustices, as one nation, indivisible, regardless of race, class, gender, political ideology, or any of the other walls that divide us, because these rights apply to all of us. In these trying times, we must tear down the walls between us and defend our liberties, because they are our only defense against the United States slipping into an authoritarian autocracy. United we stand, divided we fall.





JULIAN HOCK-BEATY | The Register

## Classes on mental health should be offered in high schools

**Simret Habte**  
staff writer

High school students have to meet a varied set of requirements before they are able to graduate. They are made to take certain classes, some even have required service projects. These requirements are set in order to prepare students for their future, whether that's college, employment, or any other routes. High school serves as a practice for real life. One thing that is often forgotten from all of these requirements is education on how to maintain one's mental health. High schools should require their students to take a

class on mental health to help them deal with any mental health issues they may face.

There isn't nearly enough emphasis placed on mental health in high school curriculums. Most schools make students take some form of a health class. Health classes are important and teach students important lessons they'll need in life, but unfortunately those classes don't give enough attention to teaching students how to understand and deal with mental health issues. The stigma surrounding illnesses such as depression and anxiety prevents these classes from teaching kids how to maintain one's mental health. Discussing mental illness causes people to get

uncomfortable. Unfortunately, that is playing a part in the lack of education students get about mental health. It's important to overcome that stigma in order to inform kids about the reality of mental illnesses.

While mental illness is stigmatized, it still has an immense impact on society. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for people ages 15 to 24 and the fourth leading cause of death among kids ages 10 to 14. These are extremely concerning statistics. A class on mental health would not just prepare students for the future, but also equip them to seek help during their adolescence. There are many aspects in life that could take a toll

on a teenager's mental health; family issues, friends and classmates, school stress, and other daily struggles. A class that focuses on mental health would teach students about varying mental illness. It would provide them with the language to identify their feelings and be able to express them to others. Just like every high school student knows the mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell, they should know what depression is and how to recognize its signs. Lessons like this could greatly improve the lives of the students and quite literally save lives.

## Addressing systemic incarceration is first step to solution for overcrowding

**Mac O'Brien**  
staff writer

The ACLU of Nebraska filed a lawsuit last August which alleged, "For over twenty years, Nebraska state prisons have been overcrowded, under-resourced, and understaffed. The result is a dangerous system in perpetual crisis." The lawsuit resulted from the fact that the Nebraska prison system is filled to 160 percent of its design capacity, a state of overcrowding that threatens the wellbeing of both the inmates and the prison staff. In the past two years, Tecumseh State Prison has had two riots which have resulted in two deaths, and numerous guard injuries. This "state of perpetual crisis," as the ACLU put it, represents a fundamental failing by the state government to provide an adequate level of care for its citizens. If someone is going to be incarcerated, the government at the very least has the responsibility to ensure their safety.

To be able to fix the flaws with the Nebraska criminal justice system, it is important to recognize that they stem from a national issue of mass incarceration. The United States has the highest per capita incarceration rate in the world, at 716 per 100,000. The result is a justice system which requires around

\$74 billion annually to maintain, and incarcerates thousands more than is necessary for the safety of the public.

One reason the problem of mass incarceration in the United States persists is that Americans are responding to an imaginary issue. Polls have demonstrated that even in years when the crime rate decreased, a majority of Americans still thought that violent crime was increasing. This is because mainstream media outlets have been increasingly shying away from expensive and time consuming investigative journalism, in favor of sensationalized coverage of crime. This coverage misleads the public into thinking that the crime rate is worse than it actually is, which fosters support for "tough on crime" candidates who make worsening the problem of mass incarceration a key component of their campaigns.

The desire for harsher sentencing has led to the creation of habitual criminal sentencing laws, which increase the sentences of repeat offenders. In Nebraska, a person who has been twice convicted of a felony and sent to prison can have 10 years automatically added to their sentence. For instance, if a person is found with a pound of marijuana twice, they would be considered a habitual offender, and subject to an extra decade behind bars. This practice keeps inmates in prison far

longer than they need to be, and contributes to the overcrowding in Nebraska prisons.

Another cause of national mass incarceration is the "War on Drugs," which began with Richard Nixon and was made worse by Ronald Reagan. The policy drastically increased the number of people sent to prison for drug related offences, especially targeting minorities, and fueled the soaring rates of incarceration that led to today's mass incarceration.

The War on Drugs led to the creation of harsh mandatory minimums for drug related crimes which keep non-violent criminals in prison for far longer than is necessary. The repeal of these mandatory minimums in Nebraska would help to reduce prison overcrowding at no greater risk to the public.

It would be wrong to say there has been no action by the state government to reduce prison overcrowding. In recent years, growing bipartisan support for the reduction of the prison population has caused the number of incarcerated individuals to stagnate. This is a step in the right direction, but it is not enough. In order to properly combat prison overcrowding in Nebraska, the state legislature need to remove mandatory minimums for drug offences, and repeal habitual criminal sentencing laws.

## Non-voters have no right to complain about nation's political climate

Voting is great. You get to put into power the person you like and you can push for your ideals and opinions to be represented in Government. It's certainly better than a dictatorship, where your beliefs will only hold sway if you're friends with the leader. Voting is a manifestation of freedom and I think it's magnificent.

Unfortunately, there are those who refuse to exercise their freedom by voting and that is the root of America's problems: not voting. These people employ many argument justifying their unamerican decision to not vote.

The one argument that I understand is from those who do not vote because they politicians more than anything else, those who find politicians scarier than any monster. They feel that politicians are out to exploit them for personal gain. I understand this sentiment, truly I do. Unfortunately, since these same people who hate politicians are also those who

do not vote due to disillusionment and distrust, they are the reason the politicians that they bemoan can retain power. This concept that the best way to protest a system is by not involving yourself in it is absurd. Say 60 percent of people in a Congressional district hate their Congressman and because of that they choose to forego voting all together. The only people who would be voting are the only 40 percent of people in the district who do support the Congressman. Because the 60% allowed themselves to be disillusioned, they guaranteed the man they hate reelection. Under all circumstances, not voting makes it easier for the person you oppose to win.

Then there's the argument of "but if I don't like either candidate." This is a bad argument as well as, there are always more than two candidates in a race and there is always more than one race on an electoral ballot and if there are truly only two candidates running



MALCOLM DURFEE O'BRIEN

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for a seat, then just write in a protest vote. Just because you dislike the people in the major race of the does not mean that you should ignore the other races all together.

Another argument for people who do not vote is that they "don't have time to learn about the issues," but this is another foolish

sentiment. If someone spends ten minutes a night researching each candidate's policies beginning two weeks prior to election day, you will be almost entirely informed and if you don't have time for even that, just assume the candidate's beliefs from what Party banner they are running under.

The final argument that I have heard for those who do not vote is that they "don't have time to vote," and this would be a defensible excuse around 40 years ago, but the fact of the matter is that these days people can make time to vote whether they vote on election day or in the easily accessed early voting.

To conclude, if you love America and hate those in politics there's only one way to fix the system: voting. Truly, the cure for democracy is more democracy. To stop those who would divide the nation, who would treat the world as their Guinea Pig, we must vote.



# WHAT'S ON THE WEB ▶▶▶



Gift-giving is one of the most difficult tasks to complete especially during such a stressful time of year. Read this guide for ideas for friends and family.

## GIFTS TO GIVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



# A month in review

Here are a series of photos from late November that summarize extra curricular activities throughout Central.



DALILAH VALDEZ, EMMA NEILAND, ALEC ROME, DILLON GALLOWAY

1. Wrestling begins with a pre-regular season match against Burke.
2. Senior Alan Lopez is one of the varsity basketball managers. He cheers on the team in their first game against Bryan.
3. Junior Lauren Anderson races to finish an event at the Benson "Swimvite."
4. The girls' varsity basketball team also had their first game recently defeating Bryan.
5. Senior Lauryn Niemans and junior Henry Wisneski perform a skit together at the second annual improv night.
6. Senior Roman Behrens struggles to make his way to the hoop in the team's game against Bryan.

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