



# the REGISTER

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LUCY MASON | The Register

Ellisa Kirksey was named principal of Central in June. She has worked for OPS since 1990.

## NEW BOSS

Downtown high is proud to introduce the new principal

**Livia Ziskey**  
editor-in-chief

Central introduced a new, yet familiar, face to the head of the administration this school year. Ellisa Kirksey, former assistant principal, replaced Dr. Ed Bennett, who had been principal since 2013. He announced that he would be moving to Minneapolis for family opportunities.

Although new to the head principal position, Kirksey has gained years of experience working in OPS. She first taught at King Science and Technology Magnet Center.

"I began working for OPS in August of 1990. I was a seventh-grade social studies teacher," Kirksey said.

She moved to the OPS student and community services department in 1998. However, she always wanted to be an assistant principal, so she accepted the position at Central in 2000. Kirksey sees Central as a special place and community.

"My favorite thing about Central is the diverse population and the experience," Kirksey said.

Kirksey did not immediately apply for her new position. She took some time to ponder her decision before committing to the next step.

"After Dr. Bennett retired and much soul searching, I decided to apply for the job," Kirksey said.

Now that she is in the position, Kirksey sees it as "an honor." She knows that this school year is bound to present a new set of challenges, and it will take time for students and teachers to adjust.

"I must remember students have not been in a normal school setting since March 2020," Kirksey said.

She hopes to provide opportunities for students to interact with each other in a normal way, even with the current circumstances set by the coronavirus.

"This year, I want students to experience the true high school experience as it relates to activities and creating memories," Kirksey said.

As for the challenges and adversities that Kirksey is facing as head principal, she keeps a positive mindset. She is taking this school year "day by day."

"Things get better every day," Kirksey said. "Every day is a restart."

## Joslyn museum undergoing modernization

**Cecilia Zahm**  
staff writer

The Joslyn museum broke ground in July on their new \$100 million construction project. The undertaking will create a modern addition to the museum, called the Rhonda and Howard Hawks Pavilion.

The pavilion, designed by the Norwegian architectural firm Snøhetta, will be starkly contemporary in comparison to the current art deco style of the Joslyn. This project will be adding onto the original 1931 building and the 1994 addition.

"This will be a transformative project for Joslyn, and the city of Omaha as well," said Amy Rummel, the director of public relations at Joslyn.

As of now, the museum remains open to the public with some changes, like a new entrance. But eventually the entire museum will be closed for two years for the safety of visitors, staff and the artwork on the walls. The Joslyn is currently set to close in May of 2022 and reopen when the project is completed in early 2024.

The addition is being built to meet the growing demands of the art collection. It will allow more art to actually be shown to visitors, rather than sit in storage. "This will give us the chance

to display more works, like Native American objects and works on paper, such as prints and photographs," said Rummel. "People will be getting a new view of works from across three thousand years of art."

The new wing will be 42 thousand square feet, creating gallery space that will showcase modern art. Over 50 pieces from the Phillip G. Schragger Collection of Contemporary Art were recently gifted to the museum, and these works will all be housed in the pavilion.

In addition to the Rhonda and Howard Hawks Pavilion, a renovation of the existing building will take place to create new classrooms and community spaces. The goal here is to give the main building an update and increase the ability to provide public programming.

According to Rummel, public reaction has been very positive, with lots of community feedback. "When you're so imbedded in the lives of the people that you serve, people have very strong responses," said Rummel, adding that the expansion has also received some negative responses and questions that are bound to come with a project of this size.

Because of Central's proximity to the site, students will definitely notice some changes like construction and noise. But Rummel wants Central students to know that the Joslyn Museum appreciates everyone's patience with all of the readjustments, and she encourages students to "enjoy the opportunity to watch the monumental development from Central's bird's eye view."



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## Student Democrats testify at city budget hearing

Daniel Graham  
staff writer

Three members of the Central High Student Democrats club testified before the City Council at the budget hearing on Aug. 3.

They were there, along with many others, to oppose the proposed budget increase of 1.2 percent for the police department, bringing its budget up to \$161.3 million.

"I want to live in a safe city, but I know that public safety is rooted in economic security, not in how much taxpayer money is spent on the police," Student Democrats Co-coordinator Isabella Manhart said in their testimony. "I want to see this money invested in services that aid my peers and their families."

Manhart felt it was crucial that Student Democrats go to the hearing to testify on this issue.

"We know this is not what community safety looks like," Manhart said. "So, I thought it was really important to make it easy for myself and other people to advocate against that, and to help them try to make, on a local level, the changes we need to see on a national level within policing and within community safety."

While the hearing was going on inside the Civic Center, people who were also in opposition to the police budget increase gathered outside, playing music and using sidewalk chalk to write anti-police messages. There was also a row of tables where progressive Omaha-based groups talked to attendees. Manhart felt this was one of the biggest positives that came out of the whole event for them.

"I thought that was cool, because bureaucracy doesn't always work, but there's a lot of power in communities organizing to help themselves, and having independence from the system," Manhart said. "Had I not gotten involved, I would not have been able to see the amazing work of these organizations. I think it's eye-opening to what this city can look like."

The budget later passed on Aug. 17, with some amendments that were asked for at the hearing, including \$90,000 that will go to Community Alliance's family education services, which teaches family members how to help one another during mental health crises. However, the police budget stayed the same, despite the seventy-eight people who testified against it.

"In proportion to Omaha's population, seventy-eight people isn't a lot, but it was still frustrating and disheartening, because people worked really hard in the two weeks that they gave us to organize and say that this is wrong for our city," Manhart said.

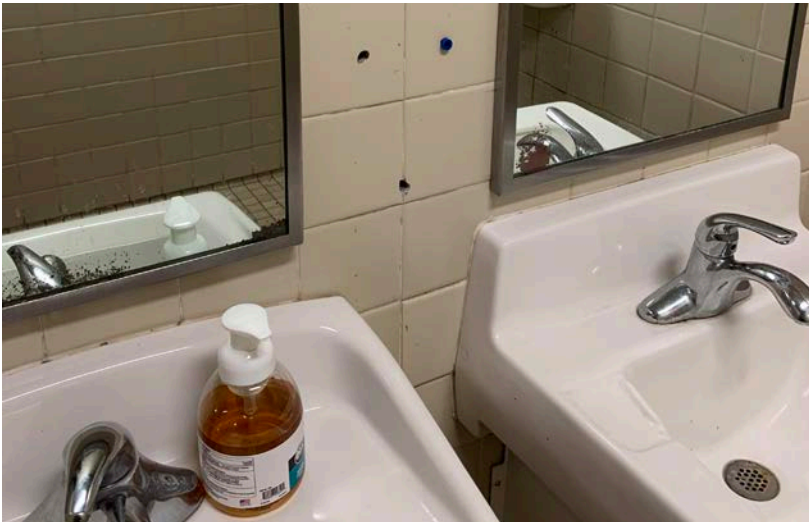


Photo Courtesy of ISABELLA MANHART

Chalk messages were written on various items around the area.

But Manhart says that Student Democrats will look for more opportunities for advocacy in the future.

"I don't think we should stop advocating and stop being involved, just because it didn't work one time," Manhart said. "That's not how bureaucracy works, that's not how government works, and that's not how city policy works. We have to stay at it. If they won't listen to 78 people, next time we'll come out with one hundred people, and we'll see what difference that makes."



CHARLIE PALMER | The Register

The stolen soap dispensers in the bathrooms have been replaced with bottles of hand soap for students to use.

## TikTok challenge damaging schools

Charlie Palmer  
staff writer

Over the past couple of weeks, middle and high schools have noticed a rampant increase in vandalism. Soap dispensers, signs, desks and even bathroom sinks have gone missing from schools. Most can agree that the viral "devious licks" TikTok challenge is to blame for this. Students on TikTok have been recording themselves breaking and stealing items in school with a sped-up version of the song "Ski Ski BasedGod" by rapper Lil B playing in the background. What seemed to be a joke at first, has spiraled into serious vandalism all over the country.

Even here at Central, teachers have reported missing items from their classrooms. Ms. Denton, a social studies teacher, recently had one of her class materials stolen. "My pencil sharpener was one of the first things taken." This occurred at the same time the TikTok trend went viral. One reason students may be participating in this challenge is for attention or acceptance.

"There is a desire to get attention and likes on social media," Denton said. Many teachers, Denton included, just want the best for their students. "I keep telling my students not to watch the videos because it just encourages stealing."

Some are wondering if Tik Tok should step in to put an end to this challenge. "I would hope from a community perspective that TikTok would do something, but they are a private corporation."

Another social studies teacher, Ms. McVay, agrees

with Denton and thinks students are participating in this challenge in hopes of gaining street cred or clout. "It is a way to gain attention from peers," she said.

On the topic of preventing this increase in vandalism, McVay explains, "Building relationships with students and having meaningful consequences is a way we can prevent it."

McVay also thinks, "Filtering inappropriate and unsafe content is something Tik Tok needs to do." After some time, Tik Tok finally removed all videos with Lil B's song in hopes of deleting the trend's most popular videos in the process.

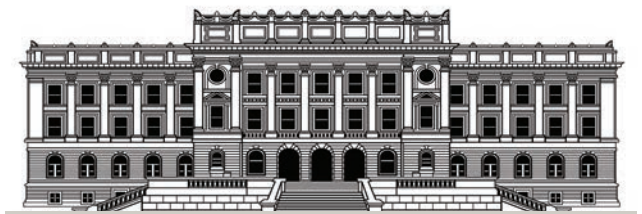
Along with teachers having to deal with classroom items being taken, bathrooms are also being vandalized by students.

Principal Ellissa Kirksey believes students are doing this to "be recognized for likes."

"The influence of social media is likely to blame. I also have to realize that young people have not been in a regular school setting since March of 2020, so the entertainment that they were getting was not typical or normal," Kirksey said. "We haven't had this many people in the building since August of 2019. People were on social media, watching TV, and Tik Tok, you come back to this setting and it's not that."

Presently, it seems the virality of the trend has died down and will hopefully never return.

Kirksey concluded, "There was no vandalism at Central this week. Don't do a challenge based on a Tik Tok, especially if it's harmful to students and property."



the REGISTER staff

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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 or come to room 029 to discuss your idea.

I am thrilled to present the first issue of The Register for the 2021-2022 school year. I look forward to informing readers through the documentation of remarkable stories and views.

As Editor-in-Chief, I am confident in the work the staff has produced over the past month, and I am proud of the final presentation. My hope is that our love for journalism shines through this issue.

I hope you find The Register compelling, informative, and welcoming. Make sure to check out our website, omahacentralregister.com, to keep up with current stories and events. We are also active on Instagram at @chs.register and Twitter at @CHS\_press. Thank you for your continued support and reading of The Register.

Livia Ziskey

Livia Ziskey  
Editor-in-Chief



LILLIAN MCEVOY | Contributing Photographer

Students and citizens from the Omaha and Lincoln area protest outside of Phi Gamma Delta on the UNL campus. The protests occurred between Aug. 24 and Aug. 28.

## Protests against fraternity gain national attention

Grace Ridgley  
section editor

At the beginning of the Fall 2021 semester at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a string of protests emerged following an incident with one of the fraternity houses on campus, Phi Gamma Delta, or Fiji. Thousands of students and citizens of the Lincoln and Omaha area gathered on Aug. 24-28 to rally against an alleged rapist who is part of the fraternity house. UNL sophomore and Central High alumnus Dillon Galloway participated in the protests.

"Fiji is actually notorious on campus for doing similar things, such as drugging and raping girls—along with other issues as well. And this most recent incident kind of woke people up, not only because it was such a bad sexual assault, but also because it was in the first week of school when classes had just started that day, I believe. It just caught everyone off guard that someone would do something like this," Galloway said.

In addition to the incident that incited these sexual assault protests, Galloway mentioned that that Fiji had been suspended from campus before after a similar occurrence in 2017, saying, "I knew it was a bad fraternity from the start because of what the other people I knew in frats said. In fact, my friends and I would specifically avoid their parties because of the suspension and what they were known for."

Over the course of five days, protestors stood outside the Fiji house on campus and in the common area of the Lincoln campus, chanting for reform and justice for the victim of the crime. Galloway went on to add that word spread by mouth during the first day of protesting. He

states, "The protest was happening in a central part of campus, so people would see what was happening and choose to join in because they realized what the situation was."

Galloway also chose to document the Fiji protests starting on the second night. He mentioned that filming and taking photos of the event is a good way to get the message out about what is happening at UNL. A petition on Change.org was created in order to demand the removal of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity from campus. This generated almost half a million signatures after the protests gained national attention.

The sexual assault incident is currently under investigation, as well as the Fiji fraternity house itself. UNL chancellor, Ronnie Green released a statement saying, "The Phi Gamma Delta (Fiji) fraternity at UNL is currently under probation for previous violations of university policy. We are closing the fraternity house and suspending operations of the Fiji chapter while this investigation is ongoing, due to potential violations of that probation. This is the responsible action to take for everyone involved."

There have not been any large protests since the statement release from Green. However, Galloway states, "Even though there haven't been any active protests, people are still spreading awareness and talking about the issue and wearing shirts or hanging posters in support of their classmates. It's just important to know that there are people there for you if you need to reach out."

National sexual assault hotline: 1-800-656-4673

## Medical practitioners impacted by virus physically, mentally

Isabel Walocha  
staff writer

The coronavirus is affecting healthcare workers in and outside of the hospital.

The coronavirus first made headlines in March of 2020 and is still changing the world today. It has been longer than a year since the United States' first lockdown and hopes of returning to a world before masks are being lost. Though 55 percent of United States citizens are fully vaccinated, those who have the option to be vaccinated and simply choose not to are contributing to the prolonged usage of masks and social distancing. The lack of vaccination is not only changing the lives citizens in United States, but also extremely affecting healthcare workers.

"Health Care Worker" is a broad grouping of all the people who work in the medical field. This includes working inside the hospital and with patients, but also includes the people who work in the technological parts of medicine.

It is no secret that Covid-19 is affecting frontline hospital workers. Nurses are currently suffering a lack of hospital needs. The inability to hold patients leaves only room for those who are the sickest. Recently, the Delta Variant of Covid-19 has been discovered to make people even sicker, putting more people in the hospital. Not only are nurses affected physically through exhaustion from excruciating hours, but they are also affected mentally and emotionally.

Most would say it is not an easy job to take care of sick people all day. This is a normal task of a frontline hospital

worker, specifically a nurse. Nurses not only take treat sickness; patients also rely on them for reassurance of their health and safety. This pandemic has nurses fearing for their health and safety as well. Many nurses come home to a family after multiple days of working and are afraid that they are going to give this virus to their family. Nurses now must deal with the stress in and outside of the hospital. Media coverage shows the struggle of Covid-19 patients, but it does not show the impact on nurses and doctors who cannot run from the realization that this pandemic and these patients are not getting better.

Covid-19 does not only affect front-line hospital workers. This virus affects all aspects of the medical field, including informational technology.

Informational technology is one of the most important attributes in the function of a hospital. Informational technologists have many responsibilities, including configuring documentation for the frontline health care workers. It is the job of the informational technologists to ensure the safety of patients by keeping their medical records and playing a part in creating effective treatment plans. The job is always changing, especially considering the creating of new treatment plans as the virus evolves.

Denise Liljestrand is an information technologist for the University of Nebraska Medical Center, also known as UNMC. Liljestrand comments on the effects that Covid has had on her job.

"Covid-19 has affected the work I do now in information technology by maintaining the electronic health record. I currently use my knowledge and experience as a nurse to

lead a team of analysts who configure documentation for the frontline health care workers. My team focuses on usability, efficiency, and notifications to best care for all patients, including the continuous changes in recommendations to care for COVID-19 patients based on evidence based best practices," Liljestrand said.

Liljestrand says that the vaccine is one of the most important factors of ending the virus. Research and data have proven that vaccines are effective in curing and preventing viruses. She stresses how important it is to vaccinate, and comments on her experiences with vaccines as a child.

"I believe in research and outcomes of the data. When I was younger, I thought I was invincible, like Captain Marvel. My parents followed the vaccine recommendations and now that I am a mother, and for their safety and the safety of those around them, they also receive the CDC recommended vaccines," Liljestrand said.

To conclude, Liljestrand gives her opinion on Covid-19 in schools.

"Ralph Waldo Emerson said 'As soon as there is life there is danger.' Your life will be filled with dangers, like getting in a motor vehicle accident. You have control of how you will face these life experiences. Will you wear your seatbelt? Facing the threats of Covid-19, will you wear a mask? Wash your hands? Will you live your life in fear, or will you educate yourself to overcome adversity and live life to the fullest? I send my children to school, knowing they have the knowledge to keep themselves safe in the presence of danger," Liljestrand said.



VERONICA WEIDE - JUNIOR



HADLEY FORSEN - SOPHOMORE



AVA BURK - SENIOR

LUCY MASON | The Register

## Completely virtual to fully in-person, students share their stories

Shyla Youngs  
staff writer

For those of us who didn't return back to school when hybrid learning went into place, or again when everyone could return this year will be their first time in school since March of 2020. Sophomore Hadley Forsen, junior Veronica Weide and senior Ava Burk share their experiences from last year and how it has affected their return.

**Q: How would you describe returning back to in person school after so long?**

HF: I think it's been going well, at least for me, and it's nice to actually be able to see people after not really seeing anyone last year. I think the transition from learning hasn't been too bad either. So, I'd say it's been successful. It's definitely weird experiencing freshman things as a sophomore, like Central's stairs. I'm starting to get used to things but there's definitely some adjustment.

VW: Returning back to in person school after so long was super nerve-racking. It felt like I was going to a new school and it was very out of place. As time has gone on, it's made me feel a bit more comfortable.

AB: It's was definitely weird. It's weird also because throughout quarantine there was a lot of stuff that happened besides COVID so it was like the whole vibe totally changed. Everyone's attitudes, I feel like changed. Teachers and students are both undergoing a lot of stress right now, and on top of that a new principal. I come back to in-person and it feels like a totally different place and I'm a senior so I don't even know like 80 percent of the people walking the halls now.

**Q: What was the best and worst thing about being fully virtual?**

HF: The best thing about being fully virtual was time. I had a lot of time to do more things whereas now I'm getting home quite late, spending time doing homework, and then I have to eat and it's time to go to bed already. Last year, I could read a book a week and spend time with family. The worst thing was not seeing anybody. It's kind of sad because I would see things on social media, and people having fun in school with their friends. I would think to myself "I could be doing that."

VW: The best thing about online school was most definitely the flexibility. Online classes were transportable and you could be doing your homework at anytime, anywhere. The worst thing was the motivation to learn and keep up with work. It was very hard to pay attention to the calls because you're in such a comfortable area while learning.

AB: The best thing was having total control over my schedule. So, I could eat lunch while on my math class, or do yoga while listening to my choir class sing. The worst thing was the lack of interaction I had between everyone. I would text a couple people but other than that I wouldn't be able to look at them or talk to them.

**Q: What is the best and worst thing about in-person school?**

HF: The best thing is being able to make new friends and seeing people I haven't seen in a long time. It's a lot nicer to have in-person instruction because there are more resources. The worst thing was losing all of that extra time. It's definitely weird because you're in the same boat as

the freshmen essentially. You've met some teachers, kind of and you've met some friends, kind of.

VW: The best thing about in person school is making relationships with your teachers and friends. It's way easier to talk to your teachers, whether it's about the lesson you're learning or just small talk. Also, it was a challenge trying to make friends over online school. The worst thing about it in person school is how much of your day it feels like you're losing. School takes up about 8 to 9 hours of your day which makes you feel like you wasted a lot of time.

AB: The best thing is meeting my teachers. I really missed them. My friends I see all the time outside of school, so that wasn't a huge difference. Actually being able to see the teachers and get to know them a little bit makes the learning experience so much better. Waking up sucks and that's really been hard for me. Another thing I don't like is going from being so independent with my learning last year, and then transitioning to this feels like a prison. There's so many more rules and structure it's hard.

**Q: How do you think the return affected you socially?**

HF: It affected me a lot. I would text people and I did make a few friends during online school, but I literally did not have a social life. I would only hangout with my family and it's so different now being able to talk to people. I definitely thrive more being at school.

VW: My return to in person school has made me more social with almost everyone. Been isolated for all of last school year made me lose a lot of my social skills and friends, so coming back to hundreds of kids surrounding me every day and doing icebreakers of my classes sort of made me force myself back into it all. I do think that it was a good thing because I got back into the swing of things.

AB: Honestly, I've been way more anti-social after the return. I don't understand how it happened, but I don't really see my friends as much. It's so weird, I would've thought it would make me way more social but I was so much more social when I didn't have to come here. I could hang out with my friends whenever which makes sense, now we don't have any classes together which has made things harder.

**Q: How do you think the return affected you academically?**

HF: I don't think it affected me, and I'm very lucky because I know a lot of other people struggled. Especially last year when school ended, I would get all of my homework done immediately. Now, I have to go to school get all of this homework, take an hour-long bus ride home and then spend an hour doing work at home. So, it's more intense but learning wise I did have a good experience remotely and in person.

VW: Last year, tests and homework were very flexible from the teachers so it's easy to do well on assignments. So, coming back this year to everything being "hard-core" as a junior, I think it will be somewhat of a challenge. I'm hoping it doesn't bring down my grades too much compared to last year but I'm going to put in the work to keep my grades where I want them to be.

AB: Academically I did worse online although I was emotionally happier. Which I think makes total sense, because I don't think school is set up in a way to make you feel good. I've always passed my classes I just did less, and it was harder to pay attention.

## Debate team returns for the first time since 2012

Jane McGill  
staff writer

For the first time in nine years, Central will have a debate team with a brand new coach to match. English teacher Aaron Shurevich was born and raised in Fremont, Neb., where he first became involved in debate as a high school student. After serving as a student teacher at Millard West where he worked as an assistant coach on his debate team, he became the head debate coach at Millard North. When Shurevich began his first year as debate coach at Millard North, there were seven students on the team. By the end of his first year, there were 35. When he left Millard North due to concerns about returning given the school district's handling of the ongoing pandemic, the team included over 70 debaters and had won six consecutive state titles.

After being hired at Central, his initial plan wasn't to go back to coaching debate.

"My original plan was that I was done with debate, I just needed to take time away because I was burned out," he said. "But, when I moved, it felt like that passion came back a little bit, it was much more of what I'd loved about debate years ago."

As Central had not had a debate team since 2012, Shurevich had to restart the club himself. Influencing his decision to bring debate back to Central is his wish to honor the memory

of Seth Rich, the last Central student to qualify for debate at nationals, who was tragically murdered in a mugging in Washington D.C. in 2016.

"Debate is transformative first and foremost, it is something that can make you think differently, it can make you a better critical thinker. Critical thinking skills are so important, in a world where we've got folks who deny the efficacy of masks and vaccines during a global pandemic it highlights the necessity of people who can evaluate information in a critical way. Debate is life-altering activity and in a lot of ways a life-saving activity, for me debate was one of the reasons I graduated high school, it was the thing that got me out of bed in the morning when other things wouldn't and, if nothing else I want an activity that did that to me to be there for another pain in the butt student like I was that might need the one thing that can get them there" Shurevich said.

While debate has only just begun, Shurevich has already expressed his enthusiasm for the group of students that have joined. "Even with everyone being brand new, I think we have a really good shot at placing like top five [at state] right out of the gate. I think it's a genuine possibility that the amalgamation of people we have right now is already going to be at a high enough level, starting out in the season we could do some damage at tournaments right away, and that is really exciting to me."

The students who have joined the debate team thus far have similarly expressed their tentative excitement for the year ahead.

"I think we'll do pretty good, because debate has a lot to do with your ability to write an argument and how to form it, and we have a really stellar English department going on here so that should be good, not to mention Mr. Shurevich is experienced, so I don't think we're going to win state or anything but I don't think we're going to be pulverized," sophomore Valur Jaksha said.

Echoing similar sentiments, sophomore Izzy Walocha said, "I have no previous experience with debate, but I'm excited to learn and hopefully keep doing it till I graduate."

Shurevich encourages any student interested to check out the team. "I'd tell them there's not any pressure, drop by and see what it's like, and if they hate it, I'll just wave at them at tell them that it's great to see them, but I'm not going to hold anyone hostage. Debate is a time-consuming activity, it is an activity that takes a lot of intellectual and emotional investment, but if you get there and go 'Oh man this is pretty cool, this feels like the kind of place for me', it's going to be the kind of place you develop a connection to, friends you might not have never met, everybody comes together, everybody's pulling for each other, and everyone is pulling for the whole community."

## First girls wrestling team starts season this November

Lea Langner  
staff writer

Wrestling coach Jimmie Foster is coaching girls wrestling this year for its first season in Central history. This addition to Central sports comes from the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) voting to officially sanction girls wrestling for the 2021-2022 school year, a decision Foster appreciates.

"Girls have wrestled since the beginning of time, just like guys," Foster said. "Wrestling teaches a lot of things that will help you later in life, so why wouldn't girls be able to do it? That doesn't make any sense".

Foster has become especially familiar with the lessons he believes wrestling can teach, as he was introduced to the sport at age 14.

"It's just a way of life," Foster said.

Despite the upcoming season in November being the first for girls wrestling, Foster's experience as the wrestling coach for over 20 years gives him the ability to anticipate the distinctions between coaching girls to boys.

"When it comes down to it there's not going to be much of a difference with showing moves, but how you approach the athletes is probably going to be a little different," Foster said.

There is one aspect of the sport that Foster expects to be a barrier for the team.

"A new girl that's never wrestled before will probably have to get over some of the things in wrestling where there's so much touching," Foster said. "Once they get over that then they're fine."

The first season of any sport can be hindered by the unknown, but Foster has already determined what he wants to accomplish with the team once that barrier is broken down.

"The goal is to keep a solid group of girls that are excited about joining the program and excited about being the standard in the beginnings of the program. You would hope that years from now the girls are doing as well as the guys and more," Foster said.

Boys wrestling has been established at Central for almost 100 years and accumulated 123 state championships throughout that time. Given the sharp contrast that currently exists between the two, Foster believes the worst thing people can do is compare the boys' team to the girls' team.

"When I think of the future of the girls' team, I think of 1929 when the boys wrestling team started," Foster said. "It probably looked a lot like how the girl's wrestling team is going to look this year."

While Foster expects the girls team to eventually win state titles and see the same success as the current wrestling program, this season he is more focused on the groundwork.

"Right now, it's more about drumming up the interest and building a strong enough base so that the program can last," Foster said.

Foster is most excited for the future, as he is looking forward to watching the first team blaze the trail for girls wrestling at Central and beyond.

"Women's wrestling is on the rise and I'm just glad it's finally getting to Nebraska, so hopefully we can contribute to it," Foster said.



Photo Courtesy of **BELLA DINNELL**

## Lacrosse player sets expectations for herself, team

Conor Harley  
staff writer

Junior Bella Dinnel plays with the Omaha Lacrosse Club (OLC) and has much experience with the sport.

"I started playing in the fall of 2015 with the Omaha Lacrosse Club," says Dinnel. "The only lacrosse club in Omaha." The lack of options across Omaha made it slightly difficult for Dinnel to get into the sport.

"As an 11-year-old girl I watched a Disney movie called Invisible Sister where the main character plays lacrosse...after watching that movie I asked my mom if I could play lacrosse." After this, she and her mom found one of the few lacrosse clubs in Omaha, the OLC.

Dinnel played all through elementary and middle school and in 8th grade, she tried out for and played for the Westside Warriors' lacrosse team.

"As an eighth grader playing for Westside but planning on going to Central, me and my dad talked about starting a lacrosse club at Central," Dinnel said.

Lacrosse is becoming more and more played in Omaha with there now being an end of the season high school tournament to compete in. This trend has been traveling upwards for a few years now.

Dinnel puts an emphasis on how badly she wants to win and improve individually and as a team. She says that is the goal of the fall season.

"Fall is about developing as individuals and as a team, and growing the sport and our program," Dinnel said. "Expectations for myself are to become a better attacker and teammate."

The main season for lacrosse comes in the spring which culminates with a tournament to crown one high school superior to the rest.

"At the team overall level is to improve upon what we did last year in the league, get more dubs, make a deep run in the playoffs and make it all the way to the championship game." said Dinnel.

She has made many great memories throughout her time playing, whether it be winning games, creating bonds or learning lessons that are applicable to life, but one memory comes over the rest for Dinnel.

"In our first season we beat Westside on their senior night on their home field, and they were super upset," Dinnel said. "We created a little rivalry between the two of us."

The rivalry between her old team and current team is just some of the fuel to the fire Dinnel hopes to use to push the lady Eagles lacrosse team to their first championship this spring.

The purple team has started their season 1-1 with the white team going 0-2 after their first weekend of competition, but like Dinnel said, the fall is for player development and building chemistry.

With Dinnel placing an emphasis on becoming a better teammate, the eagles are hoping for a great fall season to transition them into an ever-important spring season.

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# opinion

## PRO/CON: BLOCK SCHEDULING

As block scheduling seems to be in Central's future, how will this change affect students and teachers?

CHLOE JOHNSON | Contributing Cartoonist

### Block should be blocked

Noemi Gilbert  
staff writer

Rumors have been floating around Central about a possible change to block scheduling for the 2022-2023 school year. Central is the only school in the district that does not have block scheduling and we should keep our nine-period day for the foreseeable future.

A block schedule includes four 90-minute class periods a day, along with a 45-minute lunch period. Central's current schedule allows students to take nine class periods if they want, allowing students to take plenty of different electives. The opportunity for nine periods is especially important for students in the IB program: the IB diploma program requirements occupy eight periods, so the ninth allows IB students to take an elective that they care about. If we did not have a nine-period day, I wouldn't be able to take newspaper- one of the classes that means the most to me.

Everyone learns in different ways. Some people thrive in block scheduled classes, and that is wonderful. The other 6 OPS schools can cater to students who enjoy block scheduling, but it's important for the district to be able to support students who learn differently. It's unfair and hypocritical to force all students to conform to one schedule, especially when we know that some students thrive with the traditional nine period schedule.

I have always struggled to focus during block periods. Ninety minutes is a long time to be in one subject, with one teacher and the same people. By the end of block periods, many students have completely lost focus and teachers struggle to maintain control of a classroom of bored, disengaged students.

Changing a schedule seems like a low priority compared to every other issue facing Central students and staff right now. Students and staff have experienced grief, difficult transitions and a total upending of our school customs and ways of life. We see the effects of these difficult transitions in the number of fights in the hallways and the struggle to get back to the school routine. We should allow students and teachers the opportunity to return to normal instead of forcing yet another transition on us.

I enjoy walking around during passing periods. I appreciate the separation it gives me between classes and the opportunity to visit with friends and teachers I see on my way to my next class. Eight times a day, I love the opportunity to stretch my legs and walk. The nine period day works for many Central students. In fact, it's the reason many people choose to attend Central over other OPS schools. It's not fair for the district to force every high school student to learn the exact same way. We need to stop the advance of block scheduling on Central.

### Block scheduling is fine

Daniel Graham  
staff writer

Block scheduling is coming to Central next year, making it the final high school in OPS to adopt the system. Although many have expressed their unhappiness about this decision, the change from a nine period schedule to a block schedule will be an unimportant one in the long run.

For those unfamiliar, block scheduling is a system where, instead of having nine classes a day, a student has half their classes one day and the other half the next. The statistics surrounding block scheduling are murky. There are two types of block scheduling: A/B (the two-day schedule that Central is adopting) and 4/4 (a schedule where students take four of their classes in the first semester and the other four in the second).

Most of the studies conducted on block scheduling have been done either on a combination of the two, or just on 4/4 scheduling. However, few of these studies are reliable or recent, despite the fact that block scheduling is not all that new to education. The most conclusive evidence in favor of A/B block scheduling comes from the School Superintendents Association (the AASA), which claims that under A/B scheduling, grades improve and the number of students who make the honor roll increases.

The AASA also claims that about a third of schools in the U.S. use block scheduling. Although this does not guarantee that block scheduling is a perfect system, it does mean that it is used across the nation, with some success. Without further data, the only arguments to be

made on this subject are theoretical.

Central has not yet announced some of the precise details about how block scheduling will work, such as whether each day will contain four or five blocks, how classes that were already on a block schedule (like some science classes) will be changed, and how the new advisement classes will change.

What is known about the change, according to an article from last March by the Register's Jaden Cheloha, is that each student will have a twenty-five minute lunch period each day during third block, in one of three slots.

This is one of the most obvious benefits of Central's block scheduling plan. Right now, many students do not have a lunch period, either because they have to take so many classes that they don't have space in their schedules, or because they would rather spend the time taking an elective than at lunch for a full period. With a built-in lunch, students would be given a time set aside for them to eat or have a break from classes. This would be a great

**BLOCK** on page 9



### Beauty standard toxic, causes self-perception issues

Ziya Gaskin  
staff writer

Self-perception is one's impression of the style and allure of one's own body. Someone's perception relies exclusively on the standard that has been set by the general public. Everyone has their philosophies on what a common body type should look like. Due to the promotions and motion pictures, the bodies are altered, and improved and later become the perfect body type for ladies.

As thin women's bodies started to appear in magazines in the mid 20s, the rise of eating disorders began. Today's ultra-thin ideal in modeling was much curvier and womanly in the 1990s, where as the "Twiggy" aesthetic was popular in the 70's. Going further back women in paintings and portraits were conveyed as curvy through the renaissance era. A woman's shape that is "on trend" depends on a variety of social and cultural factors that change over time.

When we speak of models, the body specifications expose the prejudice pre-established body requirements that the fashion industry has set. Western and Indian culture allowed young girls and women to feel less confident in their own skin. Going to the 80's, women's beauty and body image wasn't considered if it didn't cater to the ideas of conventional beauty. When you think of a fashion model, what do you think of? Slim, tall, and fair skinned right? Plus-sized females were rejected based on their size and the diversity in models were slim to none.

Thankfully, as time went by, the fashion industry has made their models diverse ranged of varied sizes. There has been such an enormous difference from how prejudiced the industry once was in the 80/90's to now where models of different races and body types can come together and show off the amazing pieces designers have to offer.



**IPADS** on page 7



**ABORTION BAN** on page 9



**MUSIC** on page 7



Ella Novak | The Register

## iPads cause issues

Ella Novak  
staff writer

As most people know, at the beginning of 2020, OPS students received their school iPads for virtual schooling during the peak of the pandemic. While the iPad could be very helpful for joining meetings, I think that OPS did not think about their high school students when they were planning to use iPads.

High schoolers are known for having to type up 5-page research papers. While doing that on an iPad is possible, it is not convenient at all. That is why I think that we either should have gotten simple computers like Chromebooks, or the district should have invested in keyboard cases for middle and high school students throughout the district. Also, having a provided smart stylus with the iPads would make it so much easier for students to take notes and to do things like math homework on the iPads.

Another complaint I have about the school iPads is the new curfew that they have put in place on the devices. As of September 13, all of the OPS issued iPads have a curfew of 11 p.m. This curfew is absolutely ridiculous. Students, especially those in high school, have things like jobs, sports and extracurricular activities that keep them from getting home until late in the night. A lot of my friends have told me how when they get home from work, they have barely any time to log onto their iPad and get their homework done. While I may have slightly understood keeping the curfew only during the summer or only for elementary school kids, OPS should know that their students have their own lives that they have to balance with school and having these curfews can make that impossible for many students.

Another unfortunate part of the iPads turning off at 11 is the fact that people often will be working on something (on an app without auto-save) and not paying attention to the time and then suddenly, all of the progress that they had made on their work had been deleted.

The iPads also limit the number of websites that students can visit. While I agree students shouldn't be viewing super explicit things, I find that when I'm doing research for school on my iPad, I am often limited in what I can find when researching because of the insanely strict website restrictions.

Overall, I think that OPS could have thought more logically about their decision to give iPads to high school students. In the state that we have them right now, they are more of an annoyance than a real help.

## Music festivals should return permanently, under these conditions

Charlie Palmer  
staff writer

Since the beginning of 2020, COVID-19 has forced the shutdown of nearly everything, including music festivals. With the availability of vaccines in the United States, many COVID-19 restrictions are being lifted. Does this mean people can expect popular music festivals to fully return?

Lollapalooza, one very well-known music festival in Chicago, required vaccination or proof of a negative COVID-19 test in the past three days to be let in. Chicago health officials have considered Lollapalooza 2021 to be a success. There seemed to be no substantial impact to Chicago's COVID-19 epidemiology after the festival.

If other big music festivals follow similar COVID-19 protocols and require certain verifications, music should be able to make a full comeback. However, many head coordinators of events still have issues with working everything out.

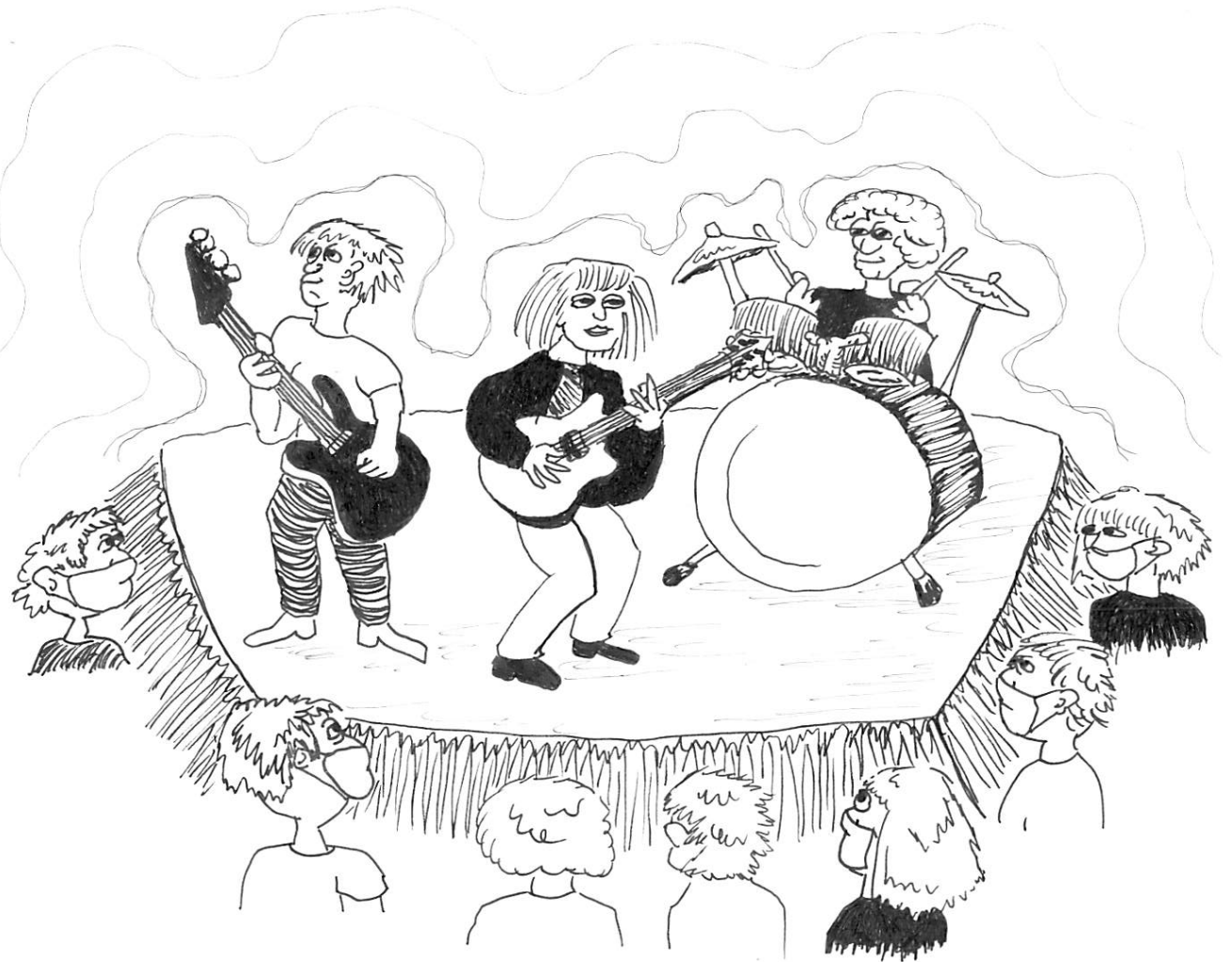
Unlike Lollapalooza, organizers of the New Orleans Jazz Fest cancelled their two week event because of safety and health concerns relating to the pandemic. New Orleans is currently experiencing an exponential growth of COVID-19 cases. The festival has been rescheduled and can be expected to return next spring.

Additionally, Seven Peaks Fest in Colorado was cancelled because organizers of the event faced difficulties with capacity restrictions by local health officials.

It is better to cancel large music festivals than for things to take a turn for the worse.

COVID-19 outbreaks have been linked to some music festivals. 66 people tested positive for COVID-19 after the Pendleton Whiskey Music Fest in Oregon on July 10 this year. Out of all 66 infected with the virus, only five were vaccinated beforehand. This leads back to the previous idea that people should be fully vaccinated if they are going to attend music festivals.

Overall, I think that all music festivals should require verification of vaccinated people or people who test negative for COVID-19. Organizers of Lollapalooza did a perfect job of



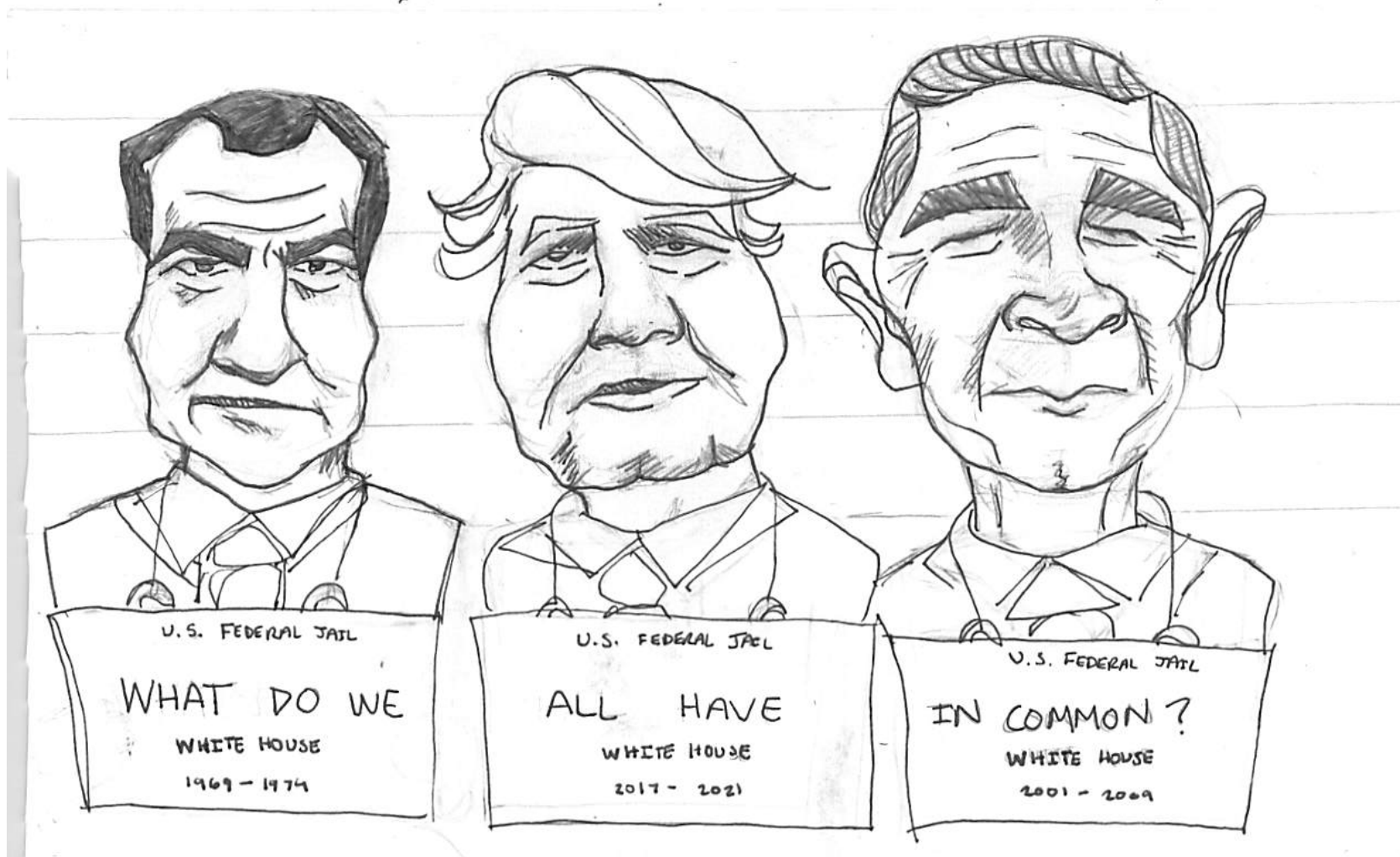
JACK JENOWE | Contributing Cartoonist

ensuring the safety of others at their music festival while still being able to make it feel as normal as possible.

Additionally, organizers should definitely coordinate with health officials and lower max capacity if it is recommended. If music festivals cannot find ways to meet these safety standards, they should cancel and reschedule their

event to a later date so the pandemic does not continue to spread.

With the wide availability of vaccines in the United States, music festivals will be able to fully return as long as people keep getting vaccinated and safety protocols are followed.



NYALEAK ESKE | Contributing Cartoonist

## Every living U.S. president should be tried for war crimes

Jane McGill  
staff writer

On Nov. 29, 1945, at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, the International Military Tribunal began a trial that both succeeded in unveiling the nature and extent of the atrocities committed by Hitler's regime and indicting many of the most prominent members of the Nazi Party in the process. The principles of the tribunal determined that an individual was indictable if they had participated in a plan or conspiracy in order to commit a crime against the peace, planned, initiated, and waged wars of aggression and other crimes against the peace, participated in war crimes, or committed crimes against humanity. If the same criteria applied to the Nazis in this trial were applied to the six U.S. presidents alive today, each one would be indictable. In order to reveal before the world the extent of the atrocities they have committed and to serve some semblance of justice to their millions of both living and dead victims, another international tribunal must be formed to try these men and any other high-ranking officials involved in their horrific crimes. These six men, indeed these six war criminals, need to be held accountable for the evils they have committed.

These statements may be shocking to Americans of both political parties. So, in order to justify my claim that it is once again necessary for the former leaders of a nation to be tried before the global community, I will briefly discuss some of the greatest crimes they committed.

Jimmy Carter

The oldest living president is Jimmy Carter. In 1978, Carter radically increased the flow of U.S. advanced weapons to the Indonesian military, which was at the height of its invasion of East Timor and at the time was committing atrocities against the Timorese. The sale of weapons increased to the point in which over 90 percent of all arms shipments to Indonesia were from the United States, with the Catholic Church estimating over 200,000 East Timorese were killed with U.S. weapons. Carter also increased military aid to

Israel, which used the funds, weaponry, and vehicles the United States provided to launch a large-scale invasion of Lebanon and to continue establishing illegal colonial settlements in the West Bank.

Bill Clinton

The second president who is still alive today is Bill Clinton, but you may be surprised

***Bush committed the greatest war crime of the 21st century so far by way of his invasion and occupation of Iraq beginning in 2003.***

to learn that infidelity was the least of his crimes. On the onset of the Clinton presidency, his administration set the stage for their philosophy on foreign policy by declaring UN peace resolutions in the Middle East "obsolete and anachronistic". Clinton would go on to oversee what was described as a "peace process" in the region by continuing to use taxpayer funds to illegally support both the Israeli colonization of the West Bank and the brutal Israeli occupation of Palestine. Sanctions levied against Iraq by the Clinton Administration were genocidal in proportion, resulting in the deaths of millions of Iraqis, including over 500,000 Iraqi infants. Clinton also sold large quantities of weapons to the Turkish government, which used the weaponry to commit acts of ethnically motivated mass murder in Kurdish communities throughout southeastern Turkey. According to the Turkish governments own estimates, the U.S. weapons were used to destroy over 3,500 Kurdish towns and villages. Clinton also ordered campaigns of bombings and biological warfare in Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

The brutal two-month long bombardment of Yugoslavia Clinton authorized resulted in the deaths of an unknown number of civilians.

George W. Bush

The two terms that George W. Bush served in office were a genocidal rampage that would have made Hitler himself proud. Bush committed the greatest war crime of the 21st century so far by way of his invasion and occupation of Iraq beginning in 2003. Bush falsely claimed to congress and to the United Nations Security Council that the Iraqi government was in possession of weapons of mass destruction in order to justify the war, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi citizens at the hands of

the U.S. military and thousands more at the hands of the terrorist factions that rose to power in the power vacuum that emerged after Saddam Hussein's regime fell. His other major atrocity was his invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, which began the longest war in U.S. history. Over the course of the war, hundreds of thousands of people died due to the actions of U.S. forces, and hundreds of thousands more were pushed to the brink of starvation due to the occupation.

Barack Obama

Barack Obama ran on the promise of hope and change, before taking up the presidency and revealing his true colors as just as much of a genocidal maniac as the man who preceded him. Obama quickly cemented himself as the most deadly terrorist of the 21st century so far, overseeing numerous global terror campaigns that resulted in massed and traumatized people throughout the third world. Most infamous of these were his campaigns in the Middle East, in which he used drones to murder thousands of civilians who his administration suspected, not proved, of being involved in terrorist organizations or plots. Leaked documents from inside the Pentagon revealed the people that these drones were targeting represented only about 10 percent of people that were killed in the attacks, while the other 90 percent of people who died were merely innocent civilians, primarily women and children, who just happened to be near the targets at the time of the attack. This strategy of constantly extrajudicially assassinating people throughout the Middle East led to a reign of terror throughout the region that was so severe that children prayed for gray skies because the clouds made it harder for the U.S. military to carry out these attacks.

Donald J. Trump

Then, we have Donald J. Trump, a man who needs no introduction. Aside from the hundreds of thousands of Americans that died as a result of his criminally negligent response to the COVID-19 pandemic, he continued airstrikes and bombings throughout the Middle East, resulting in untold thousands of more deaths of targets never found

guilty by any court, not to mention ordinary people who were near them at them. Trump also approved a multi-billion-dollar arms deal with Saudi Arabia during the Saudi forces' ongoing genocide in Yemen. This was only one part of his larger push to distribute more U.S. weapons to regimes across the globe, which he accomplished by lifting existing restrictions on selling weapons to countries committing human rights abuses and selling U.S. arms to far right governments and Neo-Nazi militias in Eastern Europe and totalitarian regimes in the Middle East and Asia.

Joseph Biden

All of the policy decisions constitute major war crimes and render all six men indictable under the Nuremberg principles. While Biden's administration is still fairly young, his involvement in the foreign policy of the Obama Administration and the bombings his administration has already carried out in Syria constitute war crimes, making him clearly indictable as well. None of these men ever deserve to see step foot outside of a prison cell ever again. Because of the scale and severity of the crimes against humanity and the

***Americans are the only people in the world capable of ensuring accountability for these criminals.***

beast committed by these administrations, it should be beyond doubt that both these presidents, and all officials in this administration who worked in the formation or implementation of their foreign policy, should similarly be tried in an international court of law for their role in these crimes. The sad acknowledgment that must be made however is that this is unlikely ever to happen. In 2002, Congress passed a law that would allow the President to authorize a war if the International Criminal Court so much as hears a case against any American. The truth of the matter is that no matter what atrocities our Presidents commit, the United States is so powerful on the global stage that no one outside of the country's borders can hold it accountable. We, as Americans, allowed our leaders to commit these atrocities, and so it is our moral obligation not only to ensure that these crimes do not continue, but that those who committed them are held accountable for their actions. Americans are the only people in the world capable of ensuring accountability for these criminals. It is entirely in our hands.



# Power of choice important, Texas abortion ban unethical

Callan Maher  
staff writer

On September 1 the Texas Heartbeat Act that bans abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, around six weeks of pregnancy, came into effect. This is the most restrictive abortion measure in the country. One fact that makes this law so aggravating is that most women do not know that they are pregnant by six weeks. This law strips away women's right to choose in Texas.

There is also no exception for pregnancies conceived from rape or incest. This is horrific because it means that a woman will be forced to give birth to a child she did not consent to having. The law having no exceptions to these gross acts ties into victim blaming, because these women have had their right to choose taken away and there can be consequences if they decide to have an abortion. Victims should not be twisted into villains solely because they chose not to have a child.

The people who support this law have no respect for women who are victims, did not consent to being pregnant, or who could die giving birth. This restriction will lead to some women putting themselves in danger by finding unreliable people or trying at-home methods to ending a pregnancy. One life should not be held higher than another in these situations.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott, the man who signed the Texas Heartbeat Act, did not think about the consequences of this law. Social workers and orphan care workers have not been given an income increase. There is nothing in place to relieve the pressure of the system because there will be a surplus of children entering. Forcing women to have children does not force them to keep them after they give birth. The foster care system is already overwhelmed and broken and with this restriction it will only make it worse.

This law also allows any American to sue a Texan if they help a women get an abortion after six weeks. A private citizen can be given up to \$10,000 for reporting a woman who is trying to get an abortion. First, that information and decision is only the woman's business. Second, that can open the floodgates to false accusations.



President Joe Biden said it well at a press conference when he said, "I have been, continue to be a strong supporter of Roe v Wade. Number one. And the most pernicious thing about the Texas law, it sort of creates a vigilante system, where people get rewards to go out, anyway. And it just seems, I know this sounds ridiculous, almost un-American."

Women deserve the right to choose and no man, or person for that matter, should have the power to force women into something they do not want to do. The right to choose is simply that, the power to make that decision. It does not force anyone into doing anything they do not want. Having a child, aborting a child or giving a child up are all hard choices that should never be forced.

# Block scheduling would be unnecessary change

**BLOCK** from page 6

boost to the mental health and overall well-being of students.

This is the only area where block scheduling has a clear structural advantage over nine-period scheduling. They each have their own benefits and drawbacks. Block scheduling's longer periods allow teachers to give instruction for longer at one time, whereas nine-period scheduling limits continuous class time because of the shorter periods. That said, there is a case to be made that teenagers' attention span is better suited for a shorter class, so, although teachers may prefer the greater instruction time, it may not have a positive effect on students.

It is also worth noting that teachers may be more inclined to stop instruction early in the longer, block schedule class periods. At the same time though, they would be less inclined to waste a period by getting off topic in a lesson, which occurs from time to time in the shorter class periods of a nine-period schedule.

The way a nine-period schedule allows students to have the same classes each day has benefits too. Students can get into a routine with greater ease, and they are going to remem-

ber homework assignments and test dates better with that regularity. When a student misses class, it is relatively easy for them to catch up again, whereas with block scheduling, missing one class is equivalent to missing two in a nine-period schedule, which can make things more difficult. However, having classes every other day is not without its own merits. Students have more variety in their days instead of going through the same patterns all the time, and they have more time outside of class to complete their homework.

Now, when it comes to how this change will look specifically at Central, it is worth noting that block scheduling, if it is implemented in the form of four-block days, will come with the major drawback of cutting out an entire class from each student's schedule, limiting the number of credits students can earn or make up in a year. This problem, however, is not inherent to the block scheduling system, but to how it is being implemented. OPS could easily make each day at Central consist of five blocks instead of four, or they could continue to offer zero hour classes or some other solution to allow students to take more classes.

This is the real problem with block scheduling—not the format of the schedule, but the way it has been introduced.

Parents, teachers, and students do not feel that they have been a part of the decision-making process while the district has changed the way education in Omaha will look. This is an important issue that will have to be worked out over time. However, it is not a problem with block scheduling, but with the district.

Central's transition to block scheduling will be difficult and stressful, but that will pass. Teachers will adjust their lesson plans, students will adjust their time management, and life will go on.

Perhaps if Central were the only high school in OPS to be making this change, the difficulty and stress of it all might mean that it wasn't worth it. Six other high schools in OPS now have block scheduling in place, in addition to several middle schools. It is ridiculous to believe that Central is so different from these other schools that block scheduling would work there and not here.

Central is special for many reasons, but its nine-period schedule is not one of them. Changing the schedule will not change the school's history, the school's teachers, or the school's students. It will just change when the bell rings.

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Ella Novak | The Register

## Wearing white after Labor Day: taboo or tolerated?

Claire Shafer  
staff writer

“Don’t wear white after Labor Day,” is a fashion rule we have all heard before. But, did you know the rule dates all the way back to the nineteenth century? Why does this Victorian era fashion law still govern what we wear now?

In the 19th century, clothes were expensive and most common people could not afford large wardrobes with special outfits for particular occasions. Instead, people would buy well made, sturdy clothing that would last. They would also choose dark clothing that would disguise staining and wear. The Victorians would rewear the same garments daily and repair them when needed. Since white was easy to stain and usually more light weight, it was not practical for most people.

Also at that time, going on vacation was a great privilege that only the wealthy could afford. They would escape the cities and travel to the countryside or ocean for vacation. Since there was no air conditioning, and shorts or tank tops were considered inappropriate, it was very hard to keep cool.

Therefore, vacationers wore light, thin, white fabrics to keep cool while on vacation. Because white clothes were only worn during vacation and only wealthy people could afford vacations, overtime wearing white began to symbolized wealth. Labor Day marked the end of summer when everyone arrived back home from vacation. People packed away their white clothing until next year’s summer travels, thus developing the rule to not wear white after Labor Day.

This outdated fashion rule should be abolished like many others before. For example, it is now fashionable to wear sneakers with a blazer or dress, when one hundred years ago that would have been unthinkable. Fashion trends are always evolving, and now it is perfectly permissible to wear white beyond Labor Day. And why not? Nowadays, people own larger wardrobes because clothing is relatively cheaper than it was a hundred years ago.

Additionally, we have modern detergents and washing machines that make it easier to maintain light colored clothing. Finally, today traveling is cheaper, easier and no longer restricted to the extremely wealthy as it was when the rule was first made.

We should all leave the outdated fashion rules of the elite in the past, where they belong, and wear white after Labor Day as much as we want. Go ahead and sport your white shoes and ignore this century old so-called “fashion” rule.

## United States made right decision withdrawing from Afghanistan

Isabel Walocha  
staff writer

The United States and Afghanistan have ceased the violence and reached a temporary peace agreement. On August 30, 2021, the last United States military plane left Afghanistan, putting two decades of war to rest. The war between Afghanistan and the United States began in 2001 shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attack. The fundamentalist group in Afghanistan known as the Taliban gave sanctuary to Al-Qaeda, who was responsible for the 9/11 attacks. After 7 years of partial progress, in 2008 President Barack Obama increased the military presence in Afghanistan. The inability to hold off the Taliban caused the mission to end in December 2013, but the war stayed on going.

In 2017 the United States dropped the “Mother of all Bombs” on the Islamic State. Thousands of more troops were deployed to Afghanistan and the war reached a steady stalemate. Peace talks and negotiations were reached in 2019, but the last American troop did not leave Afghanistan until August 30, 2021.

The longest war ending still leaves many possible outcomes for the future. President Biden defended the withdrawal and said the troops could not have stayed any longer.

“Conducting our drawdown differently would have certainly come with an increased risk of safety to our personnel,” said President Biden.

There is one common question raised by these actions. Did President Biden make the right decision to pull troops out of Afghanistan? As the President of the United States, it is Biden’s job to protect Americans before anyone else. Leaving Afghanistan was the safest action to take in order to protect American citizens and military personnel. The tension between the Taliban and the United States has always been thick. The presence of military only increases this tension and creates more violence surrounding the Afghan citizens who do not support the Taliban. When an offer of peace made, the option that puts the objects of priority first is the right call. To President Biden, protecting Americans is the biggest priority.

By signing this agreement Biden is not only getting Americans out of Afghanistan, but he is also trying to ensure that the Taliban is not providing sanctuary for terrorist groups that pose a threat to the United States.

This war ending also decreases the violence that is caused between the Taliban and the United States. Anyone under twenty years of age has never seen this country free of violence and war between the United States and Afghanistan. This leaves the opportunity for the country to return to a time before violence. Though this is a potential outcome, there is also the possibility that violence will ensue.

The United States has always left an impression of war on Afghan citizens. However, it is possible that for some, this ensured safety. The Taliban is a self-proclaimed “Religious Group”. They claim their actions of beating and raping women in the streets and forcing them to be covered by a Burqa in 100-degree heat is justified by religion. The Taliban has caused suffering for Afghan people, mostly women, for over the last two decades. Since 2001 there has been someone attempting to fight the Taliban and leaving a glimmer of hope for the citizens of Afghanistan. Now that the United States is out of Afghanistan, that hope is lost. No one can know if the Taliban will take control of Afghanistan and have harsher conditions than before.

There is no right answer in the mess of this war. No matter what decisions are made, or precautions are taken, there is no way to tell the outcome of the United States withdrawal. The United States made the best decision for themselves. Though it was messy and left casualties, it put the president’s priorities first. Only time will tell what the future holds for Afghan citizens and what will become of the relationship between Afghanistan and the United States.

# Withdrawal of US troops in Afghanistan

**DATE**

August 30, 2021: the last United States military plane left Afghanistan, putting two decades of war to rest.

**CONTEXT**

The war between Afghanistan and the United States began in 2001 shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attack.

**OPINION**

Leaving Afghanistan was the safest action to take in order to protect American citizens and military personnel.

# arts & style



The Maha music festival returns after taking a break in 2020. The festival has attracted music lovers since 2009.

CHARLIE PALMER | The Register

## MAHA RETURNS AFTER YEAR OFF

Charlie Palmer  
staff writer

Since 2009, the MAHA summer music festival has been held in Omaha at various locations; most recently in Stinson Park in the Aksarben area of midtown. Over the years, MAHA has featured concerts from popular music artists and groups including Lizzo, Vince Staples, Run the Jewels, Car Seat Headrest, Modest Mouse, TV on the Radio, Father John Misty, Drive By Truckers, and Weezer.

Many music enthusiasts look forward to the festival each summer. However, MAHA was put to a pause last year due to Covid-19. 2020 was a rough year for music festival lovers as nearly everything was shut down to reduce the spread of the virus during the pandemic. This left people yearning for music to finally come back. Luckily enough, MAHA was announced to return July 31, 2021.

Mike Swartz has been involved with MAHA for five years and has been a head volunteer for the past two years.

Mike's favorite part about MAHA is hanging out with the other volunteers. "There are

400 volunteers who don't get paid. They are just doing it because they want to be part of this big event."

Swartz explained that there are many things different about the MAHA festival this year of than ones previously. "We had to sell 75 percent capacity this year because of Covid-19. Tickets sold out several days before MAHA began."

"Another change is that the community village had to be cut out because people weren't supposed to congregate in small areas."

In previous years, MAHA used radio-frequency identification (RFID) for scanning tickets. However, this year they decided to switch to scanning tickets via a code on your phone. "This year's new way of scanning tickets with your phone is much easier than with radio chips. RFID was cool but ahead of its time."

This year, MAHA was cut down to only one day as compared to the previous two days in 2019. "In years to come, MAHA can expect to return back to a two-day music festival. Because of Covid, we condensed it into one day, but we're gonna take it back to two days."

Teenagers can get involved in MAHA through volunteering. "You can volunteer if you're at least 15-16 years old and are supervised. Every volunteer gets free tickets to MAHA."

## New director brings wealth of experience to band program

Callan Maher  
staff writer

Omaha Central has a new band director, Chiyo Trauernicht. She was born in Osaka, Japan but mostly lived in Chiba, Japan. Trauernicht lived in New York from the age five to seven due to her father's business but moved back to Japan. When she was 22, she moved to Nebraska. She is married to Brian Trauernicht, and they have a 19-month-old son, Connor. They also have adopted two dogs, Charlie and Callie.

Trauernicht's primary instrument is the flute, though she also plays the piccolo, alto flute and piano. The piano was the first instrument she learned how to play, starting when she was 5 years old. She played the flute in her middle school band. While studying to be a band teacher, she took a technique class which allows her to teach all band instruments.

Trauernicht co-teaches instrumental music, which includes concert band and marching band. She also co-teaches jazz band, percussion sectional, orchestra and beginning guitar. All these classes are open to all grades.

She got her first degree from Tokyo University of foreign studies, where she was an English major and got a bachelor's degree in English and a teaching certificate in secondary English. She also has a master's degree in American history.

"After arriving to Nebraska, I attended University of Nebraska Kearney, and I did teaching certificate studies in K-12 music education," Trauernicht said.

She also did a three-summer program and finished her second master's degree in wind conducting. The program was run by American Band College in southern Oregon.

"It's a very unique program for band teachers who don't want to quit to go back to school to get a master's degree in music," Trauernicht said.

Trauernicht has many years of teaching experience. While she was attending Kearney she worked as a part-time elementary general music teacher and taught a Japanese 101 and 102 course. Before coming to teach at Central, Trauernicht taught at Otte-Blair middle school for 14 years as the band teacher.

"Back then I loved middle school, was not thinking about a job switch or anything," Trauernicht said.

When Trauernicht was a first-year band teacher she decided she wanted to learn from veteran band teachers, so her mentor gave her a list of names to contact about shadowing. On that list was Pete Wilger, a former Central band director. Trauernicht came to Central and watched and learned from him.

"I was so impressed by the high energy level and diverse and inclusive school culture that I can already feel from the classroom interactions and energy in the hallways," Trauernicht said.



LUCY MASON | The Register

New band director Chiyo Trauernicht has been a teacher for 15 years. "I always thought it was a dream job," she said of Central.

She remembered Central as a great school with great students, so when the position opened up, she jumped on it.

"I always thought it was a dream job," Trauernicht said.

She was ready to challenge herself in a new position, new grade level, new city, and new environment.

"As an immigrant and as a woman of color, I felt like I wanted to be a great role model for my students at Central, if I can be. That is my down the road goal," Trauernicht said with a smile on her face. "So, I want to do a really good job to prove myself."



VEGAN RESTAURANTS on page 13



LORDE REVIEW on page 14



CLAIRO REVIEW on page 15

## Chucks as fashion sneakers or basketball shoes

Claire Shafer  
staff writer

Chuck Taylors (Chucks) are the most popular basketball shoes of all time. They are worn by every gender and age. They now come in every color, style and design imaginable, but they haven't always.

Believe it or not, the Converse company was founded over one hundred years ago in 1908, when Marquis Mills Converse started the Converse Rubber Company. The company grew rapidly, and by 1910, was producing over 4,000 pairs of rain boots daily.

In 1917, the Converse canvas All Star High Tops were released. The shoes, made for basketball players, gained popularity when the basketball star Charles "Chuck" H. Taylor endorsed them in 1921. Chuck Taylor traveled across the country to sell the shoes. He was so successful in sales that Converse added his name to the ankle patch on the shoe, creating the nickname "Chuck Taylor".

Basketball teams all over the country started sporting Chuck Taylors. They became so popular that Converse designed the off-white high-top model with red and blue patriotic stripes to be the official basketball shoe for the 1936 Olympics.

Charles Taylor served as a captain during WW2 and coached basketball teams for the troops. Chuck Taylor All Stars were worn by the teams. Later, the shoe became the official sneaker of the United States Armed Forces.

The shoes' popularity did not end there. In 1949, a black Chuck Taylor All Star High Top was introduced. They became an instant classic and every pro basketball player and team across the country wore black Chuck Taylors. Sales soared, and the company's revenues increased dramatically. Then, in 1957, a more casual alternative to the high top was introduced...the Low Cut All Stars.

In 1962, Converse made the Oxford Chuck Taylor All Star with different stitching. Four years later, Converse started offering additional colors. Seven colors were released to match basketball team uniforms. This was the beginning of colorful Converse.

Years later, in 1970, sneakers and athletic shoes became extremely popular outside of athletics. Chucks became popular with musicians, artists and young generations because of their fun colors, distinctive looks and comfort. Converse then began to make Chucks with different designs, textiles and fabrics and gained more attention because of it.

Chucks continued to evolve throughout the 80s and 90s. The classic black and off-white Converse were still popular, but some upgrades were made. In the 80s, people wore two-toned All Stars. The shoes were split down the middle with different colors on each side. At this time, people began to show their individuality by writing or drawing on their sneakers. Even with all the color and style choices available, the red High Top All Stars were the most popular in the 1990s. Today, Converse has added platform and even animal print Chuck Taylors to their lineup.

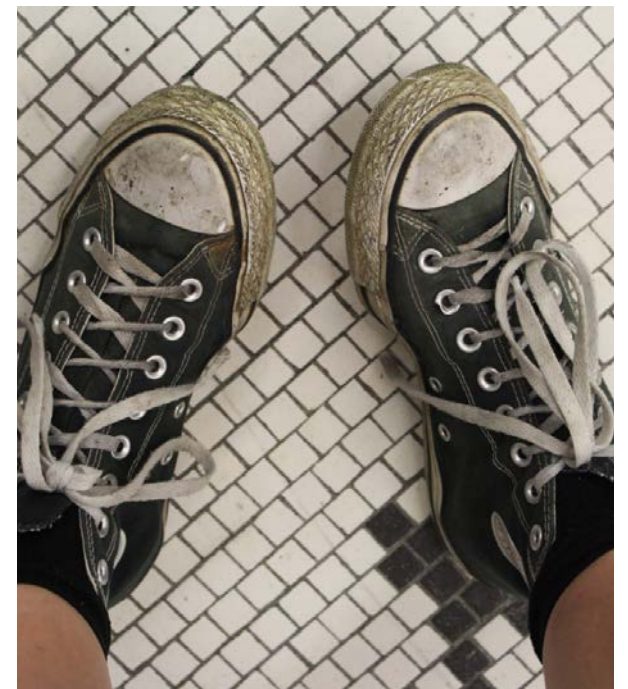
After more than a hundred years, the Chuck Taylor sneaker is still timeless, fashionable and incredibly popular today. In fact, according to chucksconnection.com, 60 percent of all Americans own or have owned at least one pair of Chuck Taylors. They are an American icon that are worn all over the world. Today, you can see Chuck Taylors in shops from the Champs-Élysées in Paris to Rodeo Drive in LA. Celebrities like Kendall Jenner and Vice President Kamala Harris are known for wearing them. Chucks are also seen everywhere in the halls of Central High.

"I have a lot of pairs of shoes, but I usually wear Converse," said sophomore Maria Lopez, who has both the classic black and two pairs of white Converse said. Lopez is not the only student rocking Chuck Taylors at Central High.

"I have the white classic ones and red ones and I wear them with everything," sophomore Brooklynne Costello said.

"I got my black, short grey, and purple from Flying Worm Vintage. I go there because they have cheap Converse and a lot of them," sophomore Bobby Winton said.

Would Marquis Mills Converse ever have imagined in 1917 that his humble canvas high top Chuck Taylor would sell over one billion pairs since then?



LUCY MASON | The Register

Students show off their classic kicks in room 029. Chucks are a historic shoe that can often be seen in the hallways or out on the street.

## Fashion and psychology influence the mind

Ella Levy  
staff writer

Fashion is a state of expression. People are motivated to be fashionable by psychological factors. Putting fashion and psychology together means making a practice and study that dives deep into the human mind- a subject many know about but not enough pay attention to.

Dawnn Karen, an instructor at the Fashion Institute of College, defines her own version of fashion psychology as the "study and treatment of how color, image, style and beauty affects human behavior, while addressing cultural norms and cultural sensitivities." Michael Solomon says that fashion psychology is a bit misleading. They say the field looks beyond the "clothing's impact on the individual. Its focus transcends clothing to also consider the impact of many other products that express self-identity."

The term "encloded cognition," is used to describe the systemic influence clothes have on the wearer's psychological process. The New York Times brings up perceptions and standards of attractiveness which are a big part of the reason people study fashion and psychology. Breaking it down, perception of attractiveness is how other people perceive someone and how attractive they find that person. Standard attractiveness is being average in society or being someone that people overlook because they do not care to perceive them.

According to Brain Fodder, "the clothes we wear affect our behavior, attitudes, personality, mood, confidence, and even the way we interact with others." The relationship between attire and attitude explains it is not just the way the clothes look but how they make someone feel.

Behavior is directly affected by the appearance of clothing. To illustrate, wearing a uniform such as a lab coat will encourage determination and focus in the mind. Wearing gym clothes

eliminates excuses and tricks the mind into working out and making healthier choices. School children in Kenya performed better when wearing a uniform. The list goes on, but anything worn affects the behavior of the person wearing them good or bad.

Clothes affect the way one is perceived in society. Motivated to dress with style comes with "conformity, desires for variety seeking, the need to express personal creativity, and sexual attraction" for this reason "appearance directly impacts the way people are treated," according to Michael Solomon.

Signaling theory, something other fashion psychologists refer to when talking about the role of clothing in attraction, agrees with the website. Michael Solomon uses the example of the peacock. The male peacock displays his astonishing fan of feathers to attract a female who will reciprocate his attractions.

Humans relate to this instinct by wearing clothes they think are attractive or clothes society tells them are attractive. Society has told all people what to wear and what to do with their lives and bodies. This a problem all people face not just women though women are a good example.

Following trends is a part of everyone's daily routine. With fashion, people stay in the guidelines of the trends but also mix in their personal style to appear to have their own sense of style. "People may conform to the basic outlines of fashion, but still improvise to make a personal statement within these general guidelines," as stated by Michael Solomon. Consumers have a need for uniqueness. People want to stand out and be different but only with others' approval.

Fashion psychology is important to marketers. Michael Solomon's article on fashion psychology explains, marketers "need to understand the factors that make it likely a product will be adopted by a group of consumers and need to predict how long that product will continue to stay in fashion." For

example, a classic is an item that has a very long acceptance cycle that has been accepted by a large group of consumers. A "fad" is an item with a short-lived cycle. A fad generally spreads quickly to a small group and is seen as outdated a few weeks after delivery.

Carolyn Mair, a psychologist with a Ph. D. in cognitive neuroscience, talks about sustainably produced clothes. "Brands have been good at raising awareness of the issue, but not at influencing purchasing decisions." She says if the fashion industry could work with psychologists, they could "implement scientifically based behavioral change programs to influence what consumers buy."

Consumers buy what produces a feeling of life fulfillment. They crave this feeling over and over because it only lasts for a certain amount of time. Advertising uses fashion psychology to tell the consumer they need something new by placing certain colors and feelings in ads.

Fashion plays into every aspect of life and is there for every feeling of it. It is important to enhance these feelings and let them shine through instead of trying to cover them up. Incorporating style into how someone is feeling gives a sense of individuality and confidence.

Psychology in fashion allows someone to appear attractive by changing something simple such as a color. Even though they still look the same they appear more attractive to the human eye and mind. This leads to confidence among the human race. When someone can use the elements, they already have, they develop a sense of security and beauty.

Fashion psychology is used by everyone every day. By waking up and putting on clothing, one is showing the world how they feel and how they are choosing to look that day. From sweatpants to a suit, everything is a choice, and everything can and will be influenced using psychology.

# VEGAN JOINTS

Trying to find restaurants that will offer vegan and vegetarian options is definitely a challenge living in Nebraska. Eating at Fauxmaha makes this challenge easy with everything on their menu being completely vegan. Fauxmaha is vegan casual eating made easy with affordable prices and a sandwich shop type menu.

For continued Covid safety, the restaurant is currently not allowing in house dining. However once one is able to dine in again, they will find a causal laid back style eatery. The table setup gives a cafeteria feel and the use of primary colors in their décor and advertising reminds me of nostalgic elementary school memories.

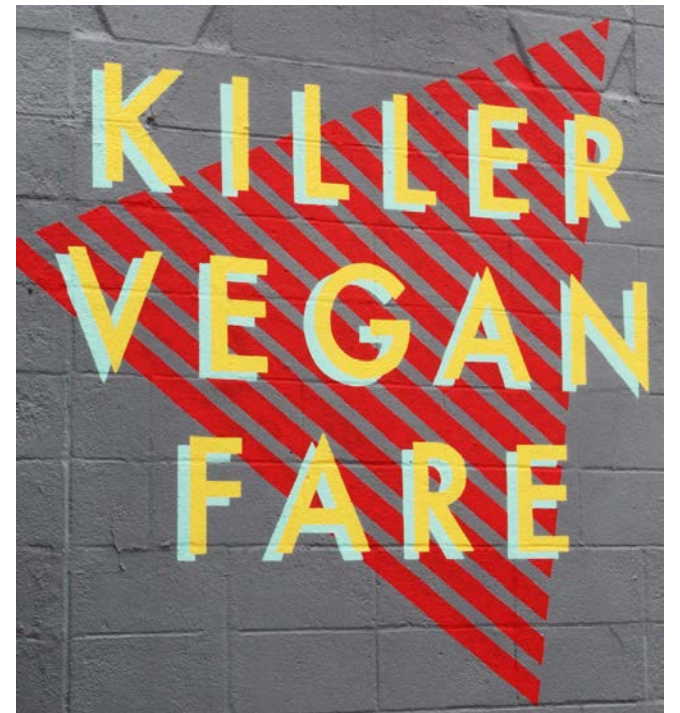
The menu, although short, fits into the feel of the restaurant. Vegan hotdogs, sandwiches, tater tot nachos and breakfast burritos are offered. My go to order is the classic Fauxmaha hot dog, with relish and mustard, and a side of tater tots. I personally find the seitan hot dog very filling and has just enough flavor, but not too much to overpower my chosen toppings. The hot dog bun itself is also incredibly impressive, most vegan bread is grainy and difficult to stomach. However, buns at Fauxmaha are light, airy, and

delicious. I one hundred percent recommend trying a Fauxmaha hotdog.

As strongly as I recommend their hotdogs, I advise caution for ordering a sandwich. On my multiple attempts to find a sandwich on the menu I enjoy, I have found one of two things to be true. The sandwiches are either bland and leave you expecting more, or the sandwiches have so much salt it is actually hard to swallow. In my recent dining experience I found their seitan Philly to be bearable, but not anything remarkable that I needed to eat again. Their French Dip dipped in the side sauce Aus Jus, was so salty I promptly spat it out of my mouth to get rid of the horrible taste.

However all three menu items cost under thirty dollars total, so although my experience was not all pleasant, I didn't feel robbed by an enormous charge. Fauxmaha is fairly inexpensive and I feel reasonably priced for the type of food served. Fauxmaha might not be my new favorite restaurant, but their food fills a need for vegan restaurants in our community. As long as one steers clear from the sandwich portion of the menu, I see no reason to not patron Fauxmaha.

## Fauxmaha | Alice Larson staff writer



The Fauxmaha building shows off fun artwork to express their vegan lifestyle.

## Naughty Buddha Burger Bar | Cecelia Zahm staff writer



The sign for this joint displays a meditating Buddha with a burger and glass of wine. The Naughty Buddha Burger Bar has a wide variety of food choices.

Naughty Buddha Burger Bar is an Omaha restaurant serving inventive vegan burgers and sides.

At about 24th and Worth, it doesn't have the best location. There aren't places around it to go shopping or hang out with friends like in Blackstone or downtown. But inside, it's a fun environment with modern, earthy hippie decor.

The prices here are really good. You can get a full meal for under ten dollars. The menu centers on burgers and sides, but there's also some choices like a vegan meatballs and pita wraps.

Naughty Buddha Burger Bar uses Impossible Burgers, which are the closest you can get to the taste and texture of meat without eating it. I tried the Singing Buddha, Blue Mountain, and Buddhacious burgers. They all came with different unique toppings.

The Singing Buddha burger was Asian inspired. It featured kimchee mayo, pickled veggies and lots of greens on top. The Blue Mountain burger had Caribbean flavors like jerk mayo and plantain chips. But my favorite burger of the three was definitely the Buddhacious, which kept things simple with classic flavors and fixings, including vegan maple bacon. What worked so well about the Buddhacious is that it wasn't trying to be something it's not, so it didn't fall short on flavors like the other two did.

My favorite part about the burgers was that they all had a big portion of greens on them, which really helped balance out their heaviness. But overall, I thought most of the burgers lacked the big flavors promised in the description, and they were just too busy.

When it comes to sides, the choices aren't what you would regularly expect with a burger. The options change daily, but during my visit there was green tea rice, Caribbean beans, and red moon slaw.

The rice was served with Thai peanut sauce that tasted good, but there were too many unnecessary ingredients on the plate, like wasabi peas, lotus root and some type of crackler. The Caribbean beans were my favorite side, they had a nice amount of heat and sweetness that went well with a classic burger. My least favorite side was the red moon slaw, which was too sweet, and had weird additions like golden raisins.

One of the biggest highlights was the presentation, which was very nice, especially for a burger joint. This restaurant also stands out as being fully vegan, so it's a great option if that's important to you.

My biggest critique of Naughty Buddha Burger Bar is that the menu is going in a lot of different directions, and some items don't seem to be able to live up to their description. I also don't understand what direction they're going for with the menu. Many items are American with Asian influences, but then there's curveballs like Mexican and Caribbean inspired items. This made some dishes so overcomplicated the flavors just became muddled.

If you do take a trip to Naughty Buddha Burger Bar, keep it simple with their more classic options like the Buddhacious burger, and you won't be disappointed. You can get a good tasting vegan meal here for a cheap price.

Modern Love offers a new way of eating to Nebraskans. Modern Love is a vegan restaurant founded by Isa Chandra Moskowitz. This location is one of the only places in Omaha that offers exclusively vegan cuisine.

Isa Chandra Moskowitz was founded the first Modern Love in Brooklyn, New York. Moskowitz brought this restaurant to Omaha in 2014 and it has been a successful business ever since.

Walking into Modern Love, I first noticed the elevated yet cozy atmosphere. The décor of Modern Love was simple yet classy, with a small flower and candle. My party's seating was in a comfortable corner, with enough table room that I was comfortable and able to hear the people at my table. The only flaw with seating was I felt very close to the table next to mine. In times before Covid-19 I do not feel that this would be a problem. The atmosphere continued to be very pleasant throughout our meal, with soft music playing in the background that created a relaxed ambiance.

My party was seated as we walked in with no wait. Immediately we were given menus and our drink orders were taken. The ordering process was great, and our waitress was extremely kind. The service receives a very high rating from me and my party, mostly because of how kind the staff is. One complaint I have about the service is our food took a little longer than expected. This was a very minimal issue for me, as they may have been understaffed because of Covid-19, or because it was the peak of dinner service and the restaurant

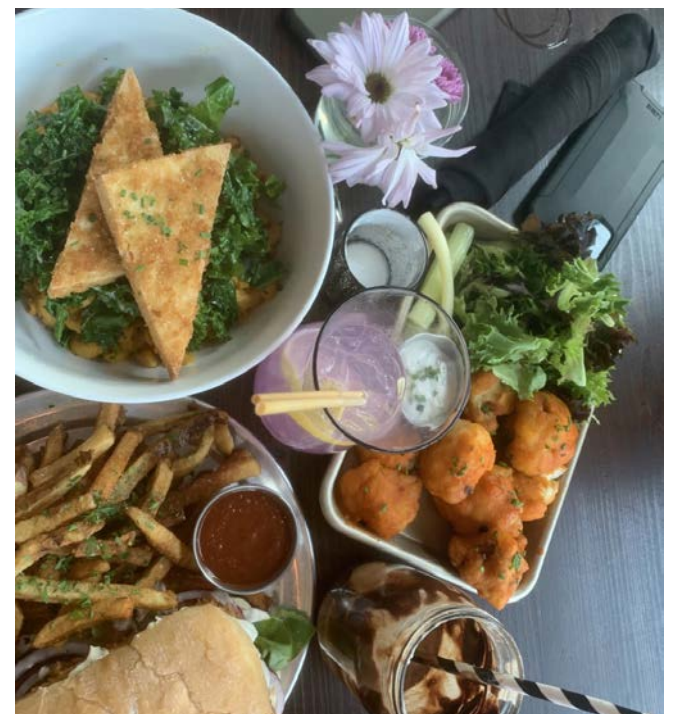
was full. Regardless, the staff was very kind and the service was almost impeccable.

At first glance, the menu had two pages of options that contained comfort food and food I've never heard of. My party decided to try something from each part of the menu, so we ordered Cauliflower Buffalo Wings, Mac and 'Shews, and a Chicken Bacon Ranch Sandwich. As stated, the food took about twenty minutes to come out, but I felt it was worth it when it did. The plating was very professional and looked elevated and delicious. I was most worried about the meat substitutes because I've had bad in the past, but the food was fantastic. It was very filling and I recommend everything I tried. Of course, we also had to have dessert and we shared a Dutch Chocolate Shake and a piece of Peanut Butter Cheesecake. Both things were delicious and I would much recommend it to someone who is vegan but misses the taste of non-vegan dessert.

The prices were slightly higher than other restaurants in the area with our bill coming to about \$70. For three people who all got a meal and dessert, I do not think this was a bad price to pay. The quality service means that the higher prices were not a deal breaker.

Overall, I had a lovely experience at Modern Love. Isa Chandra Moskowitz did a fantastic job of creating such an appetizing and inclusive menu that anyone could love. Moskowitz brought a new way of eating to Omaha and I would recommend it to anyone trying to find a bite to eat in Midtown.

## Modern Love | Isabel Walocha staff writer



Just a few of Modern Love's various vegan cuisine options are shown above

# THE REGISTER

## Lorde lights up music scene with “Solar Power”

Livia Ziskey  
editor-in-chief

Lorde finally met her fans’ cries for new music with the drop of *Solar Power*, her third studio album. The New Zealand artist released the title track of the album on June 11, 2021. Being a more upbeat and sunshine-y track than much of her previous music, fans were looking forward to this new style of Lorde.

The entire album dropped on August 20. She worked on *Solar Power* with Jack Antonoff, who is quickly becoming recognized for his contributions to the music industry, and with whom she produced her second studio album with in 2017. Lorde also decided to solely release this album through electronic means for environmental purposes.

The record consists of 12 songs, sits at 43 minutes and 13 seconds, and contains no features. It kicks off with “The Path”, in which Lorde discusses the false notion that celebrities contain all the answers to the world’s deepest secrets. She sings, “Well, if you’re looking for a savior, that’s not me...”. A choir of voices can be heard behind Lorde’s beautiful, crisp tone to add some depth to the track.

“Stoned at the Nail Salon” is the fourth song on the album, and certainly contains some of the most relatable lyrics for many of Lorde’s teen fans. It’s about the passage of time and the strange experience of getting older. Lorde sings, “And all the times they will change, it’ll all come around / I don’t know / Maybe I’m just stoned at the nail salon...”. The lyrics are magnificently tragic by themselves, but the chilled guitar in the background makes this song even more ear-catching.

In “Fallen Fruit”, Lorde gathers the young souls and reminds them that power comes with solidarity. She sings, “And we will walk together, psychedelic garlands in our hair...”. She is also blaming the older generations who have caused climate change to reach such a destructive status. Ominous bass and electric synths tie this moody song together.

“Leader of a New Regime” piggybacks off the theme of environmental degradation and is set in the future in a sort of apocalyptic world. Lorde calls for a new leadership under a fresh order because “lust and paranoia reign supreme”.

Lorde released the third single off the album, “Mood Ring”, on August 17. She breezily critiques the authenticity of wellness culture with lyrics like, “I can’t feel a thing, I keep looking at my mood ring. Tell me how I’m feeling, floating away, floating away.”

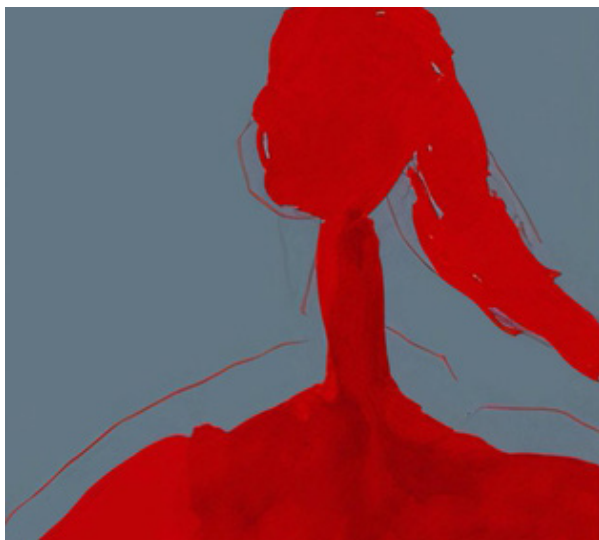
In reference to this song, Lorde wrote, “It’s full satire, inhabiting a person who’s feeling really lost and disconnected in the modern world and is trying to feel well, however she can. I felt like so many people would be able to relate to that. It was funny and gnarly to write. The melodies and the produc-



Photo Courtesy of THE ROCK BOX

tion were a great blend of that early-2000s sound and then that kind of Age of Aquarius energy. They both very much had to be present on this song.”

Lorde stayed consistent with her past songs filled with intimacy and depth, but she built on her old style by incorporating a level of maturity fans hadn’t seen from her before. She traded innocent coming-of-age tunes for a raw look at her inner self. For fans who may not be ready to embrace this new version of Lorde, she has one thing to say: “Come one, come all, I’ll tell you all my secrets.”



Photos Courtesy of KANYE WEST

Above: Kanye West teased this art as the image for the album cover of *Donda*.

Below: The finished album was released with a black square as the official cover.

## “Donda” improves Kanye’s discography, album worth the wait

Conor Harley  
staff writer

On Aug. 29, hit artist and producer Kanye West released his tenth studio album, “Donda.” It certainly stands out from the rest of his albums.

This album produced a lot of hype prior to its release and was delayed for release by roughly a month. Over this period, West provided concerts for fans to hear unfinished versions of the songs on “Donda.”

His performances packed stadiums in Atlanta and Chicago while putting on amazing visual performances alongside his music. Prior to the album’s release, *Donda* produced 12 million dollars, according to USA Magazine and Universal Music Group.

It came as a surprise to everyone when “Donda” dropped just a few days ago. Though it has received many mixed reviews, I believe that it is one of West’s best and most personal pieces.

Similar to his last album, West uses evangelical and gospel pop, but this time with a twist of inserting hip hop artists of all kinds.

On the album the listeners get a great mix of what would be considered early to mid 2000’s hip hop alongside modern day trap.

Some examples of the older styles of hip hop mixed with some gospel themes are songs on the album such as “Believe What I Say” and “Heaven and Hell.” These songs are extremely reminiscent of West’s work on past albums like “My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy.”

The more modern, trap type music appeals to an entirely different crowd, but the production makes songs like “Off the Grid” and “Tell the Vision” amazing to listen to.

Another appeal of the album is the star-studded roster of features. These features, much like the music itself, give every type of hip hop fan something to listen to. We get appearance from artists such as The Weekend, Travis Scott, Roddy Rich, Lil Baby, Pop Smoke, DaBaby, Ariana Grande, and many other great musicians.

The opening song “Jail” caught the ear of every listener. The song featured Kanye West’s long time friend, Jay-Z. Many people compared this song to West and Jay-Z’s collab album “Watch the Throne,” which debuted in 2011.

Another feature that made the album worth while is that of the late Pop Smoke’s feature on “Tell the Vision.” Pop Smoke passed away February of 2020, and has since rose to extreme levels of popularity. His feature on this song, although short, was a great thing to see.

This might be Kanye West’s most personal album. The name of his late mother, Donda, inspired the name for the album and is discussed often throughout the album. He talks often of seeing his mother in the afterlife, and what she overall meant for him.

This album is a reflection of West’s thoughts on dealing with life without his mother, the one who brought him to heights only a handful of artists have ever been. It is also important to note that much of this album was written and produced after his extremely public divorce with his wife.

The converging of his many feelings can be heard throughout the album. This is a new chapter in his life, and with it comes an album that lets all of us know.

All in all, “Donda” is an amazingly produced, thought out and overall planned piece of art that stands for itself in Kanye West’s legendary discography.

# REVIEWS

## Clairo returns with new, refreshing sound on “Sling”

| Lea Langner  
| staff writer

On July 16, 2021, Claire Cottrill, better known as Clairo, released her second album titled “Sling”. One of the most notable aspects of this record is how different it is from her other music. Although her familiar bedroom pop sound is not completely lost on this album, with traces of it seeping through the more upbeat tracks, “Amoeba” and “Zinnias,” “Sling” is a drastic departure from her previous work. Produced by Jack Antonoff, this album surrounds themes like motherhood, mental health, and the artist’s more private past. Each song tells a heartfelt story that Clairo has been wanting to tell for a while.

“Sling” was recorded during Fall 2020 at Allaire Studios, which is a homey cabin-style building in the middle of nowhere. It sits in a serene and wooded area of upstate New York and has hosted many talented artists before Clairo, including David Bowie. The atmosphere of Allaire certainly translates into the vintage folk energy of the album. Each track of “Sling” is layered with harmonious vocals and strings, tied together with soft, pattering drums that deepen the album’s warm and intimate sound.

In a way she never has before, Clairo is embracing a more wild and unrestricted form of experimentation. “Joanie” is a song named after Clairo’s main inspiration for the album, her dog, who appears on the album cover. This song, which is fully instrumental, is a showcase of the artist’s musical growth.

Another song, “Wade” features an interlude of woodwinds that seem to dance over the gentle plucking and strumming of various stringed instruments. The lengths of instrumental exploration Clairo and Antonoff went to for “Sling” is an integral part of the album’s being.

To the same extent she has instrumentally, Clairo has lyrically evolved into a true artistic force. In her debut album, “Immunity”, her lyrics predominately reflect the moment. She used simple and repeated phrases in her writing, which paired well with the indie pop genre her music fit into at the time.

On “Sling” however, Clairo truly opens up to becoming more personal and vivid with her songwriting. Her willingness to be vulnerable is a great benefit to the lyrics of the album. On the solemn track, “Just For Today” Clairo mulls over a low point in her struggle with mental health while on tour. She sings, “as we speak, I’m here to meet devils for tea, peering ‘round the corner of my life, I throw my drink into the faces of my demise”. Compared to her previous album and EP, the lyrics Clairo has written for “Sling” are significantly heavier. The writing effectively sets the scene for the



Photo Courtesy of **CLAIRO**

album, and clearly represents Clairo’s growth not only artistically, but personally as well.

Ultimately, Clairo’s “Sling” proves itself as a solid body of work. It holds a broad range of sentiment, extending from cold desperation to bright optimism. It redefines the genre of her music with bold instrumental experimentation and production. It is proof of her impressive lyrical evolution. With this album, Clairo has blossomed into a truly well-rounded and sophisticated musician. Anyone who has not yet listened to “Sling” by Clairo should do so.



Photo Courtesy of **ITUNES**

## “The Hobbit” poor portrayal of novel, disappointing

| Jaden Cheloha  
| staff writer

I became interested in J.R.R. Tolkien’s fantastical mythos after purchasing a copy of *The Hobbit* at Barnes and Noble near the start of this past summer. As I read the book, I had the idea to watch each of the three movies in *The Hobbit* trilogy once I finished each major section of the book. By the very end of summer, I had finally finished the novel, so by the time the weekend hit, I had time to watch the final film in the trilogy: *The Battle of the Five Armies*. This is a comprehensive review of that film.

The biggest issue with this movie is the insane amount of filler shoved into it. With it being based off a children’s novel, and a third of a children’s novel nonetheless, there was a severe lack of source material to fill a two-and-a-half-hour movie. Instead of doing the reasonable deed and making one film, the filmmakers decided to fill about 120 minutes of it with bloat and unneeded scenes. Most of the film is taken up by the battle itself, with action scene after action scene molding together into one long hodge-podge of CGI fights. For context, the novel dedicated a whole five pages to the battle. It was completely unnecessary to stretch that out into what it became in the movie.

There were also completely random events thrown into the film that had no backing whatsoever from the book. I would’ve been willing to sit through good additions, but everything added was a major snores-fest to get through. For example, there was a love triangle between one of the dwarves, one of the elves, and another elf for absolutely no reason. Maybe others who watched the film got more out of it, but I simply saw it as random and slightly out of place.

Another completely useless piece of filler were all the references they made to the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. These did nothing for the movies. There were cameos made by characters who originally not in the novel, and for me, that drew my focus away from the story even more. Also passing mentions of characters from the previous trilogy just felt forced.

There is nothing that redeems this movie for all its faults, but Martin Freeman sure does try to. His performance is the only aspect of the film that kept me engaged and wanting to pay meaningful attention (with one exception being the time the Elf-King rode in on a giant elk. I thought that was neat). He truly does fit the bill of a young Bilbo Baggins. However, this singular bright spot is bogged down by the fact that he’s hardly in his own movie.

The title of the film is quite literally *The Hobbit*, but it’s like the filmmakers didn’t even realize that. In the novel, Bilbo is knocked out from a blow to the head. The story then picks up when he wakes, which worked well for me. So, what was the purpose of spending so much time with every other character in the film?

It’s best to end on a strong note, and I do have one more positive about this movie. The score across the entire trilogy is very strong. It’s the least noticeable in this film but is still amazing. Props to Howard Shore for giving this series his all. (*Misty Mountains* sung by the dwarves gives me chills every time I listen to it).

This film is bad, shoved at the end of a bad trilogy with very few bright spots along the way. But, it does give Tolkien-lovers a few more hours to spend in Middle-Earth, and for some, that’s enough.

# sports & leisure

## JAYDEN DAWSON COMMITS TO LOYOLA

Central High basketball player makes decision about where to continue his athletic career

Charlie Yale  
website editor

On July 26 last summer, senior Jayden Dawson committed to play basketball at Loyola-Chicago. "It was a big decision on to the next step of my life and it was what was best for me. I went on a lot of visits to a lot of schools, and I just connected the best with the coaches, the players, the campus was beautiful, and the situation they have for me is a great opportunity there," Dawson said.

Last year, during Dawson's junior season, Central's varsity team just barely missed out on state with a 20-6 record. Dawson averaged 14.7 points, 3.5 rebounds and 1.8 assists per game. "He's really talented," says varsity head coach Eric Behrens. "He's got good size, 6'4", good length and his skill level is really good. He shoots the ball really well, he handles it and he can attack the basket. Defensively he's really versatile and he has great athleticism. He has a lot of upside because he just has a lot of tools."

When asked about the Loyola program, Behrens was very complementary: "I think he's going to a great program with a lot of tradition, and they've been really good lately. They went through a coaching change now but with the old coach they made two pretty good runs at the NCAA tournament, and they were a Final Four team just a couple years ago." Loyola's final four run occurred during the 2018 season. Since then, they won the Missouri Valley championship, sending them back to the NCAA tournament in 2021. They are currently coached by Denzel Valentine. Their last coach, Porter Moser, who graduated from Creighton, left for the Oklahoma head coaching job over the offseason.

This offseason has been an exciting one for Loyola, with two different Omaha players committing to their program. Millard North graduate Saint Thomas is currently a freshman at Loyola for basketball, and Dawson says he is excited for the opportunity to play with him. "He was just back here, because all the players and stuff was back and I was with him like every day," Dawson said. "We're pretty close."

Dawson explained that he likes to model his play style after Celtics forward Jayson Tatum. "I like to take certain stuff out of a lot of people's game, but I like to model my game after Jayson Tatum, with the build, and a little bit of Dame," Dawson said. Although Tatum is a forward and Dawson is more of a combo guard, their play styles are somewhat similar. Both can score on all three levels, have a good basketball IQ and are able to play physically on defense. Dawson is also a good spot-up shooter, reminiscent of Damian Lillard.

Although Denim Johnson was the leading scorer for Central most of the season, Behrens said that Dawson was their number one option as they got later in the season. "I thought late in the year, most of our sets were run through him, he was our leading scorer, not all the time, but often. He was certainly a focal point for us and especially our opponents," Behrens said. "If you were going to beat Central at the end of last year, you probably needed to try and shut [Dawson] down a little bit."

This coming season for Central is shaping up to be an exciting one. "I think we've got some talented guys, I think we have more size this year, I think we were pretty small last year at the varsity level and we're pretty senior heavy. We're a pretty experienced team," Behrens said. "I think we have good depth, skill level, size and we're pretty well rounded."

Dawson says that the team this year is going to surprise the league: "I'm feeling super good. A lot of people aren't expecting us to do the best this year but we got some transfers and we're ready to show up and shock the state," Dawson said. "I haven't played in front of like a big crowd since sophomore year, this will be the first time when I'm one of the best players on the team and it's just going to be super fun and super exciting."

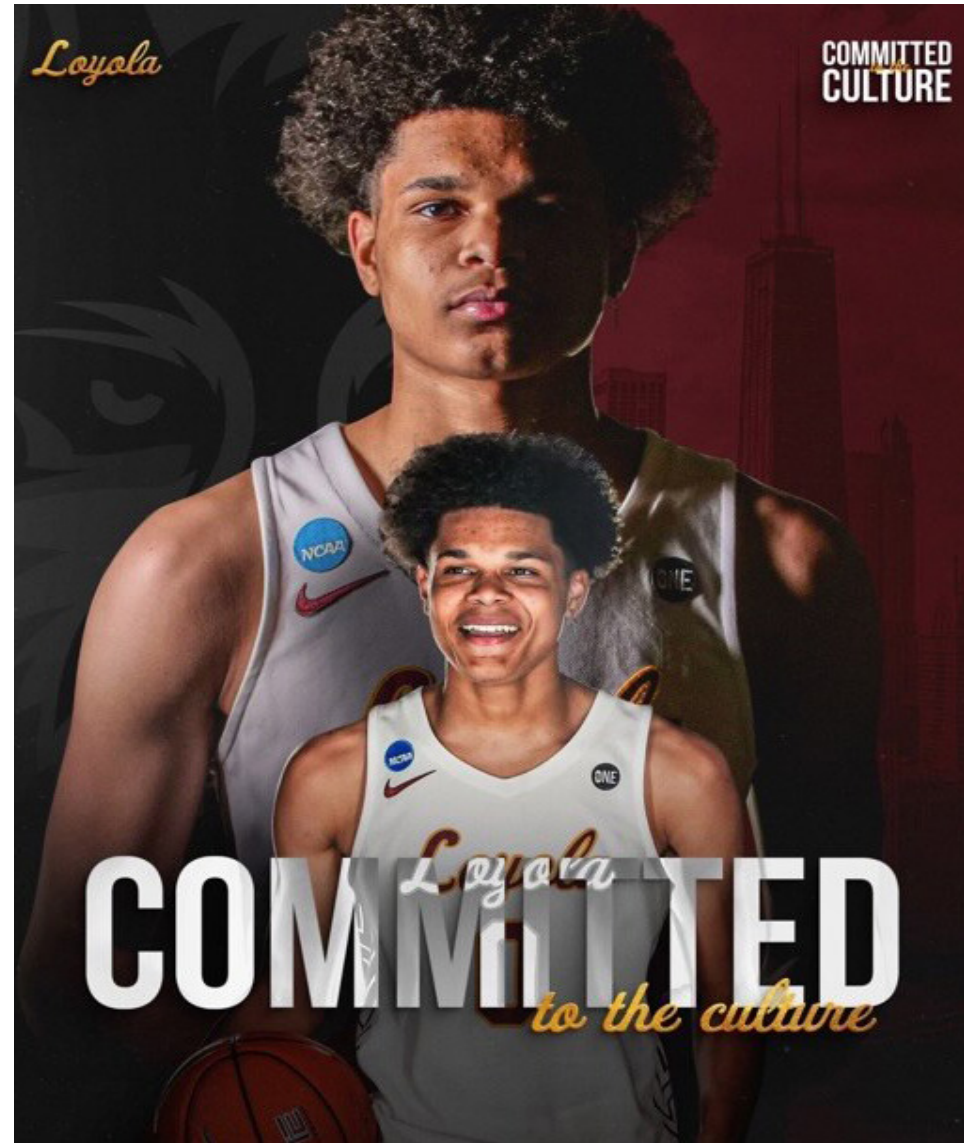


Photo Courtesy of LOYOLA-CHICAGO

Last year, Central's season came to an end against Papio-La Vista South in the district finals after a 20-6 record. This year they are looking to make another strong run and compete with some of the top teams like they did last year. "I just can't wait for this season," Dawson says.

## Dance can promote issues with body image and self-worth

Isabel Walocha  
staff writer

Dance is a way for people to express themselves with emotion that cannot be conveyed through words. I started dancing at a young age and it has grown to be something I love and a time I look forward to. Dance also can promote body issues and self-worth. However young dancers, I included, have found that tight clothes and long mirrors can increase issues with body image.

There are many types of dance that show different emotions and tell different stories. Dance can be a way to love your body. In my personal experience, the dance community was a positive space where I could be myself. When I was young I had a hard time expressing myself because I was shy and could not talk to people. Even though that has changed, dance is still a way to get things off my chest when I cannot put them into words. I also enjoyed the friendly competition of dance. I was always pushing myself to do a double pirouette or a calypso. These accomplishments made me love my body and the things I could do. But even though I considered myself a good dancer, I always felt pressure for a "ballerina body".

I'd like to preface that anyone who does ballet has a ballerina body. Dance today has evolved in a sense that dance contains all shapes and sizes. However, I feel there will always be a stigma around the body shape of a ballerina. The stereotypical body type of a ballerina is thin with no curves, no fat and no shape. This body type has been encouraged since the beginning for profes-

sional dance. George Balanchine founded the New York City Ballet, the first professional ballet company in the United States. Balanchine stated that the shape of a ballerina should be a line.

This harmful idea influenced dancers around the world to not eat and push themselves to have the "perfect" body. Body image issues continue to be prevalent in the dance world as young dancers feel the need to meet Balanchine's standards of being a line. The image of skinny and tall ballerinas has affected the way I dance for my entire life.

Around 12 or 13 years old I learned that I did not have a stereotypical dancer's body. For a long time I thought I just was not as graceful or could not hold my turns as long as the other girls. Things changed after I realized what stood apart from me and the other dancers. My body is not and will never be George Balanchine's definition of a perfect dancer. The mirrors, the leotards, it all made it impossible for me to dance as best as I could. It wasn't because I was incapable. It was because I could not think about anything other than how I looked in the mirror compared to the other dancers. This took a toll on my life and became an obsession. Every day I thought about how I could make myself a "line", when what I really needed to learn was to accept that I am a great dancer who will never be a line.

I was given a great dance community that told me my body is a dancer's body, no matter how it looks. It was a struggle to gain the confidence but I turned and leaped until I believed them. Over time I had a realization about my definition of dance. Dance is a place to be unconditionally and unapologetically who you are, not who someone else wants you to be.



Isabel Walocha  
sophomore



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VOLLEYBALL COMMIT on page 19



## Senior guard Deshawn Woods commits to Mizzou

Charlie Yale  
website editor

Senior Deshawn Woods announced his commitment to Missouri football this past summer. Woods, who is listed as an offensive guard, is the first overall ranked player in the state and the 142 overall ranked player in the country for the class of 2022, according to 247 Sports. “I always like to say that Missouri is the place I need to be to thrive and succeed in life. Yes, the other colleges are good, but Missouri is the one,” Woods says.

In the past couple of years, the Missouri Tigers have put some talent into the NFL including some big-ticket names like Connor McGovern, a center for the Jets, and Broncos quarterback Drew Lock. “When I look at colleges and who they put in the NFL, it’s more about who was there coaching at the time. I do believe that these are different coaches now, but it’s still great to know like ‘Wow, this is a great place where I know that there’s success at,’” Woods says. “My goal was to go to college and do what’s necessary to get to the NFL, but since I was getting looks from the higher colleges it’s like ‘Wow, thank you.’”

Missouri is currently 2-2, ranked fourth in the Southeastern Conference’s Eastern division. The SEC is one of the most competitive conferences in college football including teams like Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana State University, Florida and Georgia. Missouri has won two National Championships in the past, most recently in 2007, but they have yet to win a SEC Conference Championship. “[Missouri] did a really good job, he was mainly recruited by Coach Link and Coach Johnson, Coach Drinkwitz is their head coach, but they were very persistent, they stuck with him throughout the whole process even when we didn’t play because of COVID but they were really thorough and detailed and they worked really hard to get him which is why they got him,” head varsity football coach Jay Landstrom says. “They were consistent and stayed in contact with him.”

Woods says that his work ethic got him to where he is today. “I worked for it. I did the things necessary to get where I need to be at.” A piece of advice he would give to any young aspiring football player would be to never take anything for granted. “Never think that you made it. Ever. Always act like you’re number two even if you’re number one.”

Coach Landstrom attributes his success to his time spent in the weight room. “As long as he puts in the work, continues to get bigger and stronger, the sky is the limit for him. He works a lot in the weight room. Being on the powerlifting team, being out for track, he loves the weight room and really puts in a lot of effort and time in there,” Landstrom says. “He’s a very good player. He’s strong and physical, smart when he plays, he’s one of our captains and he’s excellent in pass protection.”

Woods is excited for the rest of this season, and he has high expectations for the Eagles. “I’m excited to watch our chemistry get better,” Woods says. “For watching us as a team become even more of a team.”



Photo Courtesy of UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI



LUCY MASON | The Register

Maintenance crews work on repairing the gym floors. Flooding over the summer caused damage to the floors, forcing the volleyball team to have to practice at Blackburn High School.

## Gym floors cause chaos for volleyball team

Ella Levy  
staff writer

As many students know at Central High School, the gym floors on the north side are torn up, trying to be fixed. The problem was caused by water damage but is now affecting the Central High volleyball team.

The problem first arose at the very end of summer and has happened before. This is the second time for this to happen on the North side. It has not happened in the South side for that is all new. The district is fixing it during this time but that does not mean consequences are not in play.

Angela Thorn, head coach of the varsity volleyball team, says the floors are a source of multiple complications for the team starting with practice. The floors cause what Thorn calls a “split practice.” This “split practice” refers to the fact the freshman and reserve team practice at Central while the junior varsity and varsity team are forced to practice at Blackburn High School.

The varsity team is currently ranked #12 in Nebraska Class A. Everyone is trying to improve throughout the season but is having a hard time doing so practicing at different locations.

When the team is not practicing, they are playing games which are also being affected. The first three home games have become away games because Central cannot host anyone let alone play a sport in a gym with floors under construction.

Despite this, the home games scheduled for October are still in place, but this could change. Thorn has her fingers crossed “hoping we can get into the gym in October.” The rest of the team is hoping for this as well.

Spending one’s last year of high school playing the sport they love is a good way to use time, but it gets slowly ruined when one is forced to practice at a different school and only play away games.

Coming off COVID their junior year, seniors really wanted to savor and enjoy their last year of volleyball. Though many are having a difficult time completing that resolution because of the gym floors. There is a chance they will have home games but that is not until October so only time will tell to know if they get to see their fans one last time.

The seniors, along with the rest of the team must keep their heads up for volleyball season has just started, meaning the team has two more months of torn floors.

With the season cancelled last year and the torn floors this year, the volleyball team must remain positive. Thorn says, “everyone is really taking it in stride,” and “going with the flow.”

Thorn appreciates this and knows the girls are strong, but the coach must be just as strong. “You have to keep a positive attitude as a coach because if I’m not positive the girls aren’t positive.”

Thorn is doing a remarkable job and not taking anything for granted. She says at least “we get to play this year.”

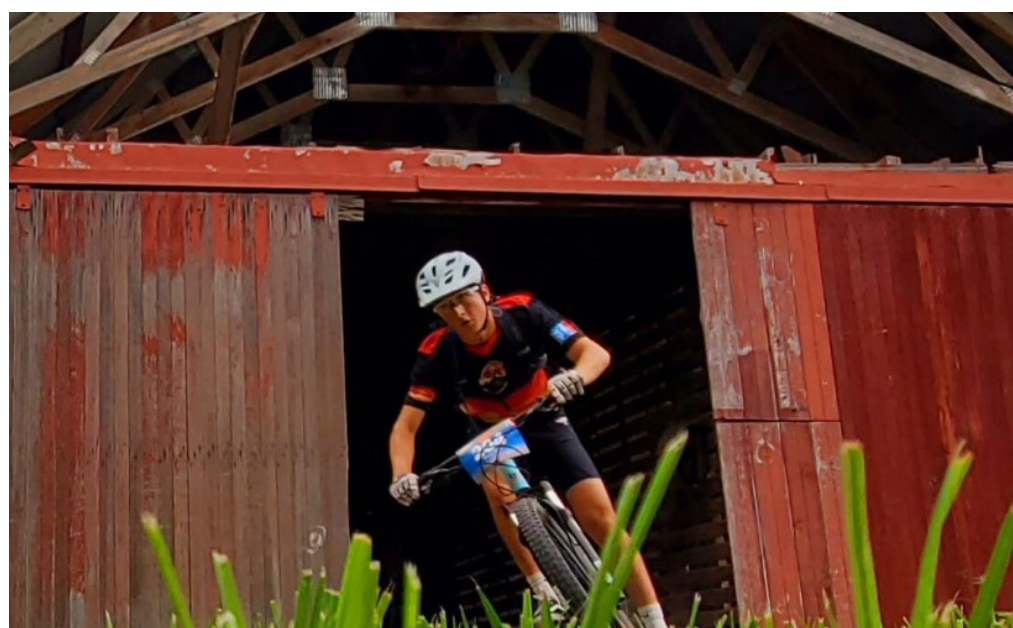


Photo Courtesy of VINCENT ORSI

Orsi rides his bike along the course and finishes the race strong.

## Senior finds purpose in competitive mountain biking

Grace Ridgley  
section editor

High schools have a variety of sport options to offer their students to participate with. Between soccer, swimming, basketball and many other well known choices, there seems to be something for anyone. One sport that may not come to mind is mountain biking. However, senior Vince Orsi competes competitively in this sport.

"I've done it with my dad for probably three or four years, but I just started doing it competitively in the last two," states Orsi when asked about his experience with mountain biking. "The league is called NICA, and it stands for Nebraska

Interscholastic Cycling League, I believe. They organize about 5, 6 races a year, and so we have practices twice a week."

Orsi continued to explain the purpose behind the biking league he is part of, stating, "It's meant to get more kids into the biking scene." One issue that he brought up was the fact that Nebraska has no actual mountains to bike on.

"It's obviously not crazy, but there's Lewis and Clark Park in Council Bluffs. There's Tranquility Park where the soccer fields are out West. Yeah, there's Swanson Park which is our home field. That's down off, I think, Cornhusker in Bellevue. There's a couple more, but there's really not much selection in Omaha," says Orsi.

Despite this, the team continues to practice, and even competes with other teams across the Omaha area. Orsi explained that there are about ten to fifteen teams within the singular league.

"I think there's a Prep team, a West-side team, a Millard team, so like all the Millard schools together, all the Elkhorn schools together, and we are the South

east Metro team."

While Covid did not allow these teams to have a race all at one time. Orsi said that they would instead do a time trial to compete. However, this year, with restrictions permitting, the league wants to do a mass start, where all the bikers race at one time to determine the winner. In order to prepare for this, Orsi and his team must meet weekly to stay sharp on their skills.

"Officially, we meet for four hours all together each week, but obviously I go more than just two times a week because that's not enough to get you in shape for a race. But we alternate between Walnut Creek and Swanson park for our group

practices," says Orsi.

For Orsi, being in nature and living it up with the outdoors is what he enjoys the most about mountain biking. "I know it sounds corny, but you're one with nature and I don't know how else to say it."

In the future, Orsi said that he would like to continue working on his mountain biking skills. However, where he chooses to attend college will dictate that.

"Like right now I'm looking at a college in Florida, where there are even less hills, so if I go somewhere like that then I probably won't put as much time into it. But I mean if I go to college in Colorado, then yeah, I'll definitely get more serious about it."

Orsi wants to recommend mountain biking for anyone who is interested in taking their biking to the next level. His final comment explained that it is not as easy as it may look, and if someone is looking to participate, they have to be prepared with safety measures taken.

"Get comfortable on your bike, and get ready to get scraped up."

## Swimmer volunteers at Olympic trials

Alice Larson  
staff writer

Every four summers when the Olympic Games occur, swim trials must take place to determine the United States Olympic swim team. The trials, held in Omaha, are an eight day event that puts the country's finest swimmers to the test. Select club swimmers from across the city are given the distinguished opportunity of volunteering.

Senior Valeria Welk was given this unique opportunity this June. Welk described the opportunity as "a sought after thing" and says as a volunteer "you get to see the Olympic idols you grew up watching, go and swim, even if you're backstage".

All volunteers must be under 18, and recommended by their club coach. Welk and the club team she swam for at the time of the trials, Omaha Swim Federation, were able to volunteer in June as basket carriers. Swimmers competing in the trials, typically wear a lot of warm up gear to keep their muscles warm before entering the water. Before starting their race, swimmers will place all their gear in laundry baskets. Basket carriers are responsible for running the swimmer's warmup gear from the block where they start, back to the athlete's lounge, before the race ends. Welk says, "For most races, you had plenty of time", to get the baskets back to the athletes lounge. Races like the 50-meter freestyle proved to be a harder challenge, because they typically are over in less than a minute. For races of this length, the entire basket carry staff would be called in, Welk said "everyone one would be sprinting down the halls trying to get the baskets to the athletes in time". Even though this part of the job was challenging, there are many enjoyable parts to volunteering.

Part of volunteering requires walking through the athlete's lounge every morning. Welk says this was one of the coolest aspects of being a volunteer, "you'd walk through and see that person has three Olympic gold medals, or that person's going to break a world record in a month, and you'd



Photo Courtesy of VALERIA WELK

Senior Valeria Welk (second from left) volunteered at the Olympic Swim Trials this past June. She has been swimming since she was 8-years-old and is on the varsity swim team.

just walk right past them, and try to keep your eyes down". While at the trials Welk also enjoyed seeing legends such as Caleb Dressel, who she described as "my favorite swimmer of all time" and Katie Ledecky compete. Welk commented "it was awesome to see everyone who was new this Olympics, because it was such a young Olympics" she particularly enjoyed seeing Katie Grimes. Welk notes that as Grimes walked by she thought, "this girl is two years younger than me, and she's going to the Olympics". In addition to seeing incredible athletes compete, Welk was able to meet "the top names in swimming, which was amazing," such as Michael Phelps, who introduced himself to all basket carriers.

Welk has been swimming since she was 8-years-old, and although she had a "love hate relationship" with the sport, she has taken it seriously since middle school. She says "with a sport that is so mental, where you can't hear anything except the water, and your own thoughts, you have to have such a good connection, and relationship with your team", it is this relationship that has motivated Welk to stick with the sport. Although she will be past the age limit for volunteers by the next Olympic swim trials, she hopes to bring this connection and passion for the sport, if she's able to volunteer again.

## Bucks' Deer District provides free attraction for fans

Daniel Graham  
staff writer

During game six of the NBA Finals this year, more than 65,000 fans gathered outside of the Fiserv Forum to watch the Milwaukee Bucks win their first NBA Championship in fifty years.

The fans were gathering in a space called the Deer District, which opened along with the Fiserv Forum on Aug. 26, 2018 and was modeled after the Toronto Raptors' Jurassic Park. In the Deer District, fans could stand and watch the game going on inside the arena for free on giant screens.

Among those who gathered in the Deer District throughout the playoffs were Marquette University students Nora Graham (a Central alum) and Emily Bittman. Their first game in the Deer District was game one of the Eastern Conference Finals, where the Bucks faced the Atlanta Hawks. The Bucks came up short in game one, but Bittman and Graham left feeling excited about the team's chances and intent on returning.

They started attending every game they could, walking about twenty or thirty minutes their home to the arena, standing in the Deer District for about two hours, and then walking back. As college students, neither one of them has a car, so they valued the ability to walk to the arena.

"The Deer District is a very central location for people, so it's nice that you can walk to it, no matter what part of the city you're from," Bittman said. "I thought that it was really nice and accessible."

This was in the middle of summer, as places were beginning to reopen and mask mandates were being lifted, before the Delta variant became a real concern. At first, being around so many people again was a little bit weird for both of them.

"I think that was the first setting where I was in a crowd without a mask," Bittman said. "It was kind of weird, but we got used to it pretty quick. It reminded me a lot of Lollapalooza, which made me feel like things were getting back to normal and people are having fun again."

There were two screens for fans to watch at in the Deer District, so Bittman and Graham chose the smaller less popular one in a gravel lot on the side of the building where the old Bucks' arena, the Bradley Center, was once located.

"In the earlier rounds, at the smaller screen, there were not that many people," Graham said. "There was space in front and behind us, and we could easily move. Every game, we ended up super close to the screen. It wasn't until the end that there were so many people you couldn't see."

Graham felt this increase in people was a sign of the Bucks' fast-growing popularity as they won more games.

"We noticed more and more people coming to games as the playoffs went on, merchandise being sold out in places, and everyone looking for Bucks gear," Graham said. "So, I think that people were not paying that much attention to Bucks games—there were some die-hard fans, you could tell that they had been there since day one—but there were loads of other people who were just there because the Bucks were doing well."

Now that the Bucks' championship run is over, Graham will continue to be a fan of the Bucks but may not be as committed any more.

"I wouldn't go super far out of my way to go to Bucks games, but that's mostly because I'm a college student and I have other commitments," Graham said. "I'll still follow them and check in on how they're doing; I won't be a die-hard fan, though."

And since the Bucks have stopped playing games for the off-season, the organization has put the Deer District to use during the summer, as Graham describes.

"They're doing a Deer District market on Wednesday nights, and they have a bunch of minority-owned businesses that they're encouraging to come," Graham said. "So, they're trying to continue using that space and that energy in a positive way."

Bittman thinks this is a great idea, because, at the moment, many of the businesses in that area are quite different from the ones that show up at the night market.

"The surrounding area has a lot of bars and places where people will go party after a game," Bittman said. "So, it's nice that while those places are bringing in a lot of revenue just from the Bucks being in the playoffs, the Deer District is being used to bring that to smaller businesses that need it as well."

Looking back on the time she spent in the Deer District, Bittman feels that the thing she liked best about it was the way it brought people together.

"Everyone was interacting with each other, all putting their energy towards the Bucks, wanting them to win, and getting excited about it," Bittman said. "That was one of the coolest things for me."

Graham also felt that this was the thing that made the Deer District special, the thing that kept drawing both of them back for each game, and the thing that will keep them coming back in the future.

"The Deer District was chaotic during the games, but it was also representative of the city," Graham said. "There would be Marquette students—and you could tell they were Marquette students—but also families nearby or an old couple, a lot of different groups of people all coming together and being supportive of the team."



Photo Courtesy of **BIANCA MARTINEZ**

## Martinez commits to dream college for division 1 volleyball

Livia Ziskey  
editor-in-chief

Senior Bianca Martinez made the ultimate decision many high school athletes dream of: committing to a D1 university for her sport. The senior volleyball player and track star began playing her beloved team sport in third grade and began club volleyball in the sixth grade.

Martinez started track in eighth grade at Davis Middle School. She participated in other sports, but they did not stick with her as much as volleyball and track did.

"I played basketball and I did swim. I did swim my entire life, but I stopped because club volleyball is at the same time, so I chose volleyball over swim," Martinez said.

During her sophomore year of high school, Martinez started to seriously consider playing volleyball at the next level.

"I got my first college interest at one of my club tournaments in January. It was from Concordia University, and that's when I really realized I wanted to play volleyball in college, and I really could," Martinez said.

The coronavirus pandemic complicated the beginning of Martinez's recruitment process, but she began to contact colleges in November of 2020 thanks to her new club.

"I changed clubs to Elite and that's when the recruitment process was much more serious for me," Martinez said.

Her club had her contact at least 100 different schools, and she had to categorize them into three distinct categories.

"One third of the colleges had to be schools that were out of my reach, another third had to be schools I was leveled with, and the last third had to be schools I knew I could definitely play at," Martinez said.

She sent an email out to all those schools, including information about herself, game film, and an indicated interest in their programs. After that, she waited for colleges to reply.

"Some replied, some didn't. I would talk to them, and I would go on phone calls, and they would watch my games," Martinez said.

In February of 2021, Cal State Fullerton, which was one of Martinez's level schools, emailed her back and the process went from there. After a few weeks of talking, Cal State gave her an offer, and then Martinez had to make her decision.

"I got another offer from UNO (University of Nebraska Omaha), so I was just kind of deciding, and I knew I was going to have other offers come in, so I was just waiting," Martinez said.

Even though she had not formally decided yet, Martinez's heart was set on Cal State from the beginning. She had a great connection with the coaches and loved talking to them on the phone. She visited the campus over the summer.

"In June I took the visit to Cal State Fullerton, and I absolutely loved it. I loved the coaches so much. We hung out with them, we ate food, it was literally the best thing ever," Martinez said.

The volleyball player is also an avid lover of track and field, and she is trying to decide if she wants to do track at Cal State.

"Instead of doing volleyball conditioning with my team I would just do track season. I know my parents really want me to do track, and I want to, but I know it would be a lot of work," Martinez said.

In terms of majors, Martinez is not sure what she wants to pursue yet. She does know that she loves her current community and returning to it would be a perfect opportunity.

"Recently, I've thought about coming back to Central and teaching and being a coach, because I love Central so much and I'd just love to be in that community," Martinez said.

For younger athletes who crave the opportunity to play the sport they love at the next level, the star volleyball player has some advice to share.

"Make sure you reach out to schools you want to go to...send emails, make film, because that is the most important thing," Martinez said. "Just work really hard and don't let anybody tell you that you can't do anything."

# DRIVING INTO SENIOR YEAR

LUCY MASON | The Register

Cars are not just used for transportation, students in the senior parking lot love to express themselves through their stickers and other decorations.

