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MCCLARNON RETURNS TO CENTRAL

Alumnus and actor finds pride in naming one of Central's four freshman teams.

Alice Larson
staff writer

Central alumnus Zahn McClarnon is no stranger to the spotlight. He has performed in on-screen productions of Reservation Dogs, Longmire and Dr. Sleep among others, and has received awards such as The Independent Spirit Award (Reservation Dogs), FAITA Award (Into the West), and Red Nation Film Award of Excellence (Strike One). However, one of McClarnon's most recent forms of recognition was the honor to have a group of freshmen bear his last name, McClarnon, as their team name.

McClarnon moved around frequently as a young person, but ultimately spent part of his high school career at Central, graduating in 1986. McClarnon reflected, "Living in the Midtown area you had Tech, Benson and Central you could go to. Central had prestige. It was listed higher academically, and I always wanted to go to Central...I wanted to graduate from Central," he said.

"Getting through and graduating from Central was a goal, and I accomplished it, therefore it helped out with a lot of my self-esteem," McClarnon said. "It just made me, as a young person, feel good."

McClarnon remarked, aside from taking drama class at Central, "I was a little bit of a loner, not an outsider, but I wasn't really involved with any extracurriculars." He didn't perform in any drama productions for the school. "I was pretty shy, nervous, and withdrawn when I was in [drama] class, but it did spark something in me."

McClarnon has credited former CHS drama teacher, Peg-

gy Stommes, with igniting a passion for acting within him.

"Peggy did spark something in me, but it didn't light the flame for another three or four years, until I got out of high school," McClarnon said.

It wasn't until after graduating from Central, a few years spent at technical school in Arizona training to be an electrician, a move to LA and a trip home back to Nebraska was the spark from Peggy Stommes lit for the actor.

Although acting was not a childhood aspiration, McClarnon noted, he always enjoyed film.

"I loved the movies, in the 70s I loved going to the movies with my mom and my parents—I loved Al Pacino and Robert Redford and I emulated them I wanted to be them, but there was no pathway to get there," McClarnon said. "I've got darker skin and I just never saw anybody in the movies that really looked like me—except for a few minor roles."

His lack of childhood aspirations led him to join the world of performing arts on a whim. McClarnon noted after moving back to Omaha in 1988, "I was bored, I had lived in Los Angeles and Phoenix, moved back to Nebraska, met a girl I was going to probably get married to and have kids... on a whim I auditioned for a play. I did the play and fell in love with acting. I just took a risk. I thought, 'ahh before I get married and have kids I want to take a risk and see if I can pursue this,' and that's what I did."

McClarnon noted from the first time he ever booked a job, he felt he'd achieved success, in being able to solely pursue acting and pay his bills. He finds it "awesome" that a new generation of freshmen bear the team name McClarnon.



Lucy Mason | The Register

Zahn McClarnon guest speaks to students in the black box theater.

New mentoring program eases freshman transition, hopes to grow

Jane McGill
staff writer

Even before COVID-19, the transition between middle school and high school was a strenuous and humiliating experience for freshmen. With the restrictions the pandemic has placed upon social interactions, and the wide-reaching effects it has had on students' health, the freshman experience has only become more taxing. To ease the difficulties the class of 2025 will be facing this year, the Freshman Advisory Board, a group composed of Central students, alumni and community partners, has launched a new Freshman Mentorship program. It partners freshmen with upper-class mentors.

"All students are getting back to the idea of being involved in school community. Learning has changed since the use of iPads. School has changed. We want to help with that transition because going from middle school to high school, there's increased rigor," English Department Head and Freshman Mentorship leader, Katherine Rude, said. "The priorities of the program are to help freshman understand the Central's traditions, the school commu-

nity and the culture here. Each teacher team nominated between five and seven students that they saw leadership potential in. We wanted to invest in those students and support them with grades and learning the school culture, in hopes that they become leaders for next year's incoming freshmen."

The program partners the chosen freshmen with juniors and seniors who signed up to participate. Prior to the pairings, Rude met with each group of students separately to talk about the purpose of the program. So far, the freshmen and upperclassmen in the program have met three times during advisement period, where they took part in activities intended to encourage the students to become involved in the school community and stress the importance of their academic pursuits.

"I thought it would be an interesting way to get involved," said senior Callan Maher, who signed up after encouragement from her English teacher. "The first meeting was awkward because it was pretty forced. Going into it, I couldn't see it going any other way because of how freshmen and seniors rarely interact. But I was very open-minded and excited. When I met him he was very quiet and

I wanted to connect, but I didn't want to make it forced. We connected over a book series we both liked. I was very happy to find common ground. The next time we met, it was way easier."

When asked if the program has been successful, Maher said, "I think it's too early to tell. I think that everyone is still dealing with awkwardness between the mentors and mentorees. I've seen a few people that clicked with their partner immediately, but I'm not alone in the sense that most of these relationships are progressing slowly. I don't think connections like the kind they want have been formed yet, but I do know eventually we'll be doing more activities. I think that's we'll begin to see a spark between people."

Leadership of the program is looking to expand offered activities. "We're going to be taking new applicants for mentors this spring and we hope to have some of those mentors participate in Freshmen Jumpstart in July to start forming those relationships a little bit earlier," Rude said. "In the fall, hopefully our partnership with Kellom Elementary grows and we'll do more service projects with them. We'll see where it goes from there."



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Upward Bound provides new opportunities to students

Daniel Graham
staff writer

Marie-Claire Broohm was in her freshman year when she first learned about a program called Upward Bound. Three years later, in her senior year, she has become the president of the program.

Upward Bound, which is run through Creighton University, had a booth during her lunch period, where she met Upward Bound Senior Coordinator Deanna Prentice. Prentice told her all about the program and gave her an application for it, if she was interested. She ended up filling out the application, and once she returned it, was invited to do an interview.

"I did the interview," Broohm said. "And they said, 'We like you, you're cool,' and they said I could join when sophomore year started."

The Upward Bound Program is not unique to Creighton; programs like it exist across the country, catering to high school students.

"Upward Bound Programs (UBP) are federally funded programs designed to assist students in developing the academic skills and personal growth necessary for successful completion of high school and admission to a four-year university," Creighton's website said.

Once a student is in the program at Creighton, the main requirement is that they attend a meeting at least once a week.

"You get a stipend for every complete week you attend," Broohm said. "So, you should be going once a week for two hours to get your stipend. Then, you need to do some volunteer activities, and you need to go to some other fun activities. You get a stipend at the end of the month that equates to how much you did. And then, there's also Saturday morning classes, so if you go to those, you also get that added to your stipend."

Students in the program use a lot of their meeting time to work on their homework, and the seniors use some of it to work on scholarship applications. They also get to participate in different fun activities, Broohm said. Some of their more recent activities include using "plarn" (plastic bag yarn) to make blankets, zip lining, and watching a movie together.

As president of Upward Bound, Broohm attends and leads all of the program's student council meetings.

"The student council is run basically by the students," Broohm said. "The administrators and the coordinators are there just to watch, just to make sure we're doing our job right. So, we'll pick the times that we meet, we'll set up all the things we need to talk about, and then we'll talk over what we need to set up for programming."

Recently, the student council has hosted a party in one of Creighton's ballrooms for their members, and it is now working on raising money for scholarships by selling snacks.



Lucy Mason | The Register

Upward Bound members, Marie-Claire Broohm and Mia Birch embrace each other.

Broohm has found in her time on student council that the most challenging part of her job is finding ways to plan events that are both popular and effective.

"It is difficult coming up with ideas that are good enough to satisfy people but are not just being people-pleasers," Broohm said. "For example: video games. We are not allowed to bring video games, because we are not allowed to damage items and that is a big risk, even if people wanted to play them. So, we have to consider the options when we are picking out ideas for different things."

Upward Bound also takes students on a spring break trip, where the students get to select the state and a few colleges to visit while they are there. As a sophomore, Broohm went on one of these trips to Chicago, where she became interested in Columbia College Chicago and the University of Chicago.

This summer, Broohm hopes to participate in Upward Bound's summer program for seniors, which is intended to prepare students for college. In the meantime, she encourages more students to join the program.

"For recommendations for eighth graders or incoming freshmen: try to look into this program to see if you can do it," Broohm said. "I think it would be a big help for your high school career."

Nebraska legislation update

Noemi Gilbert
staff writer

The 107th Nebraska Legislative Session is off to an exciting start, with a wide variety of bills on a wide range of topics. In this article I will be giving an overview of a few influential that have been introduced this session that could soon be signed into law.

Many of the bills concerning education could have a significant impact on students. LB 872, introduced by Senator Tom Brewer, would allow Indigenous students to wear their tribal regalia in schools. LB 153, introduced by Senator Justin Wayne, would include virtual school students in calculations of money provided to schools.

Several resolutions have also been introduced to conduct

studies on the feasibility of topics such as a coding curriculum, an agricultural school, the impact of natural hair discrimination in schools, and many others. One resolution, introduced by Senator Tom Brewer, would limit the amount of public school funding that can come from property taxes. The use of property taxes to fund area schools can further school inequalities because schools in wealthier neighborhoods with higher property values (and thus higher property taxes) receive more funding.

Abortion has been debated in the state of Nebraska for an extraordinarily long time, and this legislative session is no exception. Senator Julie Slama introduced a bill known as the "Heartbeat bill," which would restrict abortion after a fetal heartbeat is detected at around six weeks, before many people even know they are pregnant. Senator Joni Albrecht

introduced a bill that would, if Roe v. Wade was overturned on a federal level, immediately ban abortion in Nebraska. In other states, these bills are known as "trigger laws."

However, several bills have also been introduced to protect abortion rights in Nebraska. LB716, introduced by Senator Megan Hunt, would allow qualified practitioners to administer abortions (instead of just physicians.) LB 715, also introduced by Senator Hunt, would allow abortions to be covered under publicly funded health insurance coverage.

The full list of introduced bills can be found at nebraska-legislature.gov. On this site, you can also find your senator and submit comments on bills that are important to you. Nebraskans can monitor the status of bills as well as learn about the processes of the state legislature.

I am thrilled to present the fourth 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](https://www.instagram.com/chs.register) and twitter at [@CHS_press](https://twitter.com/CHS_press). Thank you for your continued support and reading of *The Register*.

Livia Ziskey

Livia Ziskey
Editor-in-Chief

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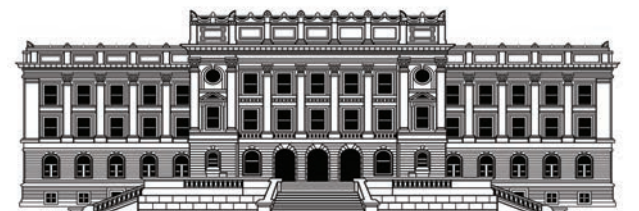
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It is the goal of the Central High Register to represent the student body in issues affecting their lives as young people and students. If you feel that we are not covering an issue that is important to you, we welcome contributing writers who bring 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.



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Senior Ava Burk poses with her first place trophy after the Central powerlifting meet. She also set her own personal record this day.



Photos Courtesy of AVA BURK

Powerlifter places first at home meet

Elena Correa
section editor

Senior Ava Burk started powerlifting after a friendly suggestion. Now she's winning medals. Burk placed first at the Central-hosted powerlifting competition in January.

"I started powerlifting because my friend, Adah Gibson, did it, and she said I would like it," Burk said. "I started lifting over the summer, and I loved it, so I decided to try it out."

Starting was anything but easy. "It was hard at first. It's not like it gets easier, but you get used to it. I'd never lifted over 200 on any of my lifts before and now both my squat and deadlift are well over 200. My bench started at 80 and I'm at over 100 now."

The pressure didn't end at the physical level for towards the beginning either. "When I started I was nervous that I would be really bad because I was so new to lifting," Burk said. "Luckily, I had my friends there and the whole team is so encouraging. I immediately I felt accepted."

Team support has been a cornerstone to Burk's performance. Her team consists of around thirty girls and her coach, Coach Baker.

"The coaches are always supportive, they are constantly pushing you and encouraging you to do more weight. Sometimes it can get frustrating, because it seems impossible. But ultimately it's good to have an outside person telling you how much you can lift, because the biggest hurdle of lifting competitively is the mental side," Burk said.

"You have to believe you can do it because most of the time, you can. When the coaches put on a weight that seems insane, they have a good idea of what you can do, and most of the time they're right."

Her victory took a whole week of preparation. "I got eight hours every night. I went to bed early and made sure I was eating right. The night before I think I went to bed at 8:30. I was nervous, so I had to take a lot of melatonin."

Breakfast, coffee, two smoothies, fruit and an energy drink were her competition day fuel. That day, Burk secured first place and set a new personal record.

"I was so nervous for my last deadlift. I had failed a 275 deadlift a week before the meet and my coaches put in that weight without my knowledge. I knew I just had to do it to take first, and I really wanted first. I ended up hitting a 275 deadlift, which got me first place."

Burk, despite her personal progress, didn't expect to take first before the meet. "I didn't even place in the first meet. I assumed I'd get second if anything. I just wanted to place honestly, but once the meet began and I realized that I was in the lead, I knew I could get first," Burk said. "That was my new goal. I wouldn't have been satisfied if I didn't take first, because I knew I could do it."

After this success, the sky is the limit for Ava Burk.

"I think of this experience as like a starting point for me, I've only been lifting for about 8 months," Burk said. "I'm glad I'm doing powerlifting, because it feels so good to lift a weight you never thought you could do and have a whole team supporting you."

Club creates safe place for young women in STEM

Shyla Youngs
staff writer

Girls Who Code is not necessarily new, the club was founded in 2012 and serves as a nonprofit organization which aims to support and increase the number of women in computer science.

At Central however, the club was funded just last November. All female and non-binary identifying students are welcome to join. Meetings are held every Monday in room 437 until 4 p.m.

Advisor Megan Nyatawa, a computer science teacher, started the club after one of her students came up with the idea of bringing the club to the nest.

"The main goals of Girls Who Code is to one, get more girls interested in coding and programming so they'll take classes, and then it might lead to pursuing a degree and career in the STEM field," Nyatawa said.

Recognizing that computer science is oftentimes a male dominated field, the club wants to make it a safe space for students who would be overlooked in a normal class setting. "We want to create a space for girls who are interested in programming and coding to just be around other girls who have the same interest as them. A lot of our computer science classes are dominated by boys so they don't necessarily have that space in class," Nyatawa said.

Nyatawa also makes sure her meeting are an open space for people to share their thought, and talk to others. She states one big part of Girls Who Code, that is integrated worldwide as a company is sisterhood.



Photos Courtesy of OMAHA CENTRAL

Club sponsor and computer science teacher, Megan Nyatawa (middle), poses with her students. Alyssa Carlson, Bosen Yusef, Macy White and Hadley Forsen-Yepes.

"We really build of the idea of getting to know other girls in your group and developing bonds with the. It really goes beyond code, and focuses too on the relationships built."

Nyatawa already sees the affects this club is bringing amongst students. There's a general excitement for meetings and interest in the topics as a whole. Members Zahar Bari and Audrey Theophilus express these same feelings.

Theophilus became aware from her program in teacher, and decided to invite Bari along with her. Ever since they have been attending meeting, and have done projects such as coding a Doja Cat music video.

"At meetings we learn about other women in STEM, which is nice to see someone like you, in a typically male dominated field. It's what I want to pursue as a career and helps me to see that coming true," Theophilus said.

Both members expressed how grateful they are to the club, especially Nyatawa for being so enthusiastic and involved as

their advisor. In Bari's words "she's so slay." On a more serious note they also stated how they look up to her.

"She's a very positive role model and an assertive women. It's empowering to see people like her lead in places like Girls Who Code," Theophilus said.

The members also expressed their love for the club, specifically the message of sisterhood.

"Its nice to be a part of a community that have the same experiences as me, and share the same interests," Bari said, "since in most coding classes they're male dominant and women get overlooked in them. This is a safe space for them to thrive without worrying about not being heard."



Lucy Mason | The Register

Computer science teacher, Megan Nyatawa, received the AP Diversity in Computer Science award for her dedication to increasing inclusivity in the field.

BMIT teacher receives AP award for women in computer technology

Isabel Walocha
staff writer

Megan Nyatawa received an award from the Advanced Placement program to honor her inclusivity of young women in the computer science program.

Computer science has a long history of being a male dominated industry. Though jobs in computer science have been rapidly growing as technology advances, women only earn 18 percent of computer science bachelor's degrees.

This may be because there are still negative connotations around women in the field. Women in computer science are still treated unfairly, as women only hold an estimated 25 percent of computer jobs and are paid six percent less than men with the same position. But Megan Nyatawa is changing the statistics by getting female students involved in computer science.

Megan Nyatawa had never really considered teaching computer science. She began her career at Central as a business teacher.

"My second year at Central, the teacher who taught web design transferred into a new position, and they asked me to take that over. I liked it a lot, so I actually enrolled in a master's program for computer science education" Nyatawa said.

Nyatawa noticed the gap in gender in computer science and technology. When Nyatawa was in high school, there was an obvious imbalance of male and female students in computer science. As a female teacher, she realized how important it was for her to bring more young women into computer science at an early age.

"Even in middle school, and sometimes even elementary, the interest in young girls in STEM starts to wane. In middle school there are fewer girls enrolled in computer science classes, and in high school even less," Nyatawa said. "This transitions into them not going

into careers in computer science, and young girls not seeing other girls in classes they thought they could be in."

Nyatawa wants to create a future where there is an equal number of women in the technology world, and those women are treated with the same respect as men.

"I don't know that I have a lot of female role models in this field, because it is so limiting," Nyatawa said.

Nyatawa is honored to be given the AP Diversity in Computer Science award, but she knows that there is still lots of work to be done. For many years, it has been taught to young children that girls should not have a career in technology. A survey covered by the University of Washington found that 51 percent of children thought girls are less interested in computer science than boys. Nyatawa is ending this cycle by giving female students the resources and confidence they need to have a career in technology. Nyatawa is creating future role models that will show young women that girls belong in STEM.

"It's exciting, I liked that we are being recognized, but truthfully, the amount of females we have in are AP classes isn't that great. It shows you how far we still have to go. We've made improvements, but it's not anywhere near 50-50, which is representative of the general student population," Nyatawa said.

Nyatawa will continue to advocate for women in STEM, even after she is done teaching. Her students inspire her every day by stepping out of their comfort zones and taking a technology class that begins their career in computer science.

"Try it out. If you see a class that interests you, just take the class, don't worry about if it's a career you can pursue. Try and find a female mentor who is doing the things that you want to do," Nyatawa said. "There are so many females in STEM that don't get the spotlight they deserve".

Mayor Stothert plans to install new transportation by 2026

Ella Levy
staff writer

After thirteen years of planning, Mayor Jean Stothert announced the plans to build a streetcar in East Omaha. The streetcar will be a mile long track and contain thirteen stops. The car will be owned by the city and operated by the transit authority. The total expenses of the car is projected to cost the city \$225-306 million. The track is expected to be up and running by 2026. Jennifer Taylor, Central alumni, works as an assistant city attorney in the civic department. Working on this project, Taylor says the track timeline to being built depends on "how quickly we get designing done."

There are still many factors being decided in the planning of the streetcar. Omaha is thinking about possibly partnering with another city on the order of materials. The next six to nine months will be a "heavy amount of engineering and planning." Taylor said the relocation of utilities and putting the rail into the street could take four years.

What Taylor calls the first phase is putting the streetcar on Farnam from streets 10th to 42nd. "Ideally we would love to have it be successful enough that it warrants to have a phase two or three," Taylor said. Phase two and three would be the extension of the track into either North or South Omaha.

"Our biggest struggle has been trying to find a viable way to pay for it," Taylor said. The city plans to issue revenue bonds to fund the streetcar. They will be issued and purchased by bond holders. The bonds will be paid back through an increased property tax revenue.

The streetcar will be modeled after streetcars in cities of similar size. Detroit, Kansas City

and Milwaukee are all examples. They have also based their data and research off these cities experiences.

The streetcar will allow dense development to be built. Increasing profit around the area will attract businesses to the heart of downtown Omaha.

Making this streetcar a transportation option is said to eventually slow the need for parking garages. This car will take away the need for driving a car everywhere a person wants to go. Taylor explains instead of building separate, small parking garages they will need to build a few large ones that are strategically placed so they can "utilize the garages and car together in what is called the total mobility system."

"For the long term growth of the city we need to take advantage of the opportunities to develop that are still available," says Taylor. "If we continue to develop the way we have been, we will lose all ability we have to density develop the core in a way that supports long term growth." Taylor thinks if they lose this opportunity they will never grow in the way the city needs to.

Taylor says creating a streetcar could eventually benefit students. "The more development downtown, the more businesses we can attract, the more jobs we could provide, the more opportunities there will be." She says students will be able to take advantage of this and find a job.

The mayor and her team seem to be creating a city that can grow long-term. They are hoping this streetcar will not only attract business but customers. Making Omaha a vibrant place is an important aspect of their reasoning for creating this project. The building blocks for their purpose of this project also stem from keeping people here. They are hoping people will want to stay in Omaha because of the long-term effects the streetcar will eventually create.

Administration introduces Eagle Bucks

Charlie Palmer
staff writer

With the start of the second semester, faculty at Omaha Central have implemented a new positive behavioral currency called "Eagle Bucks."

Eagle Bucks are to be handed out by teachers to students who have been exhibiting upstanding conduct throughout certain points of the day. If a student receives an Eagle Buck, they are then able to redeem it for a reward during a scheduled cash-in time frame.

Assistant Principal Jodi Dierks expresses, "We've had the ABC slip in the past where kids could take that to their counselor and get a prize, and this is the same type of thing, it's just that we keep trying to focus on the things that the kids are doing right because really most of our kids are doing the right things every single day. The goal is that maybe some of the kids that aren't doing all the right things will be encouraged to go in line with them."

In the beginning, students were able to trade in one

Eagle Buck for a piece of candy.

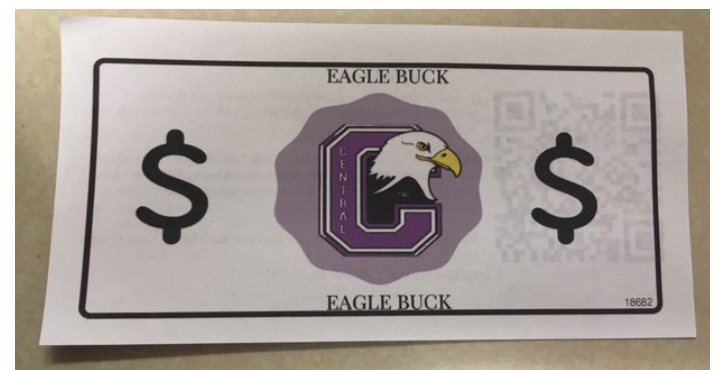
Central Staff are hoping to create more ways students can cash in their bucks. So far, cookie coupons and Hot Cheetos seemed to be a hit among many students.

In the future, students can expect even bigger rewards such as a lunch with principal Dionne Kirksey or sweatshirts and T-shirts.

Junior Sam Pieper is optimistic for the future of Eagle Bucks. "I think Eagle Bucks are really cool and I am definitely going to be saving up for some of the new prizes coming," he said.

With the first batch of Eagle Bucks being made in black and white from teachers' printers, there was some concern that students may have been counterfeiting them by copying and printing their own. Patrick Beemer, a sophomore, explains, "Yeah I've heard some people have been trying to inflate the Eagle Bucks by printing their own. It's crazy."

Dierks also indicated that there was some suspicious activity regarding students attempting to copy the Eagle Bucks. She added, "We sent all of these Eagle Bucks to printing and



publications but there was a four-week delay and we wanted to start it now, so we hurried up and made our own to get things going. We heard maybe kids were counterfeiting them so now there will be an upgraded version that we will start rolling out. We will gradually start to sunset the old ones and then bring in the new ones and figure out what new items the kids want."

Future Eagle Bucks are going to see notable visual improvements and even contain their own QR code which will fasten the new and hopeful system in place.

Food waste at Central causes student concern

Natalie Tse
contributing writer

It is well-known that food waste is a “bad thing.” However, many people and corporations aren’t aware of the genuine consequences that result from the amount of food mankind wastes.

Very few people know exactly how much food is wasted every year, which has led to continued ignorance in society. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture, or the USDA, around 30-40 per cent of the food supply in America is left uneaten. Putting this data into perspective, that would be like dropping four out of ten bags of food from grocery shopping in the parking lot and not picking it up.

When asked about her opinions on food waste in society, Jane McGill stated, “There is far too much food waste in our society. Especially considering the vast inequalities that exist in food consumption both between first world and third world countries and between socioeconomic classes within first world countries. I certainly think that it’s an issue that society as a whole should act on.”

The principal culprit in the large amount of food waste in America is households. About 40 to 50 percent of waste occurs at the consumer level, according to FoodPrint. Households don’t do this purposefully; it is just something that happens. When asked how much her household throws out food, Lucy Rawlinson, a student at Central High School stated, “We try to avoid it, but it’s definitely a problem with bread and other things that expire fast because we can’t eat all of them between only three people. It’s something that we are working to improve on.”

Families tend to throw away food, not with any malicious intent, but mainly because they can’t eat the large portions they bought at the store, or they bought food they didn’t need.

Another large contributor to food waste is schools. According to Penn State, plate waste at schools ranged from 27 to 53 percent. A factor in the amount of food waste produced by schools could be requirements that are placed on students. When asked why students are required to take certain foods, Tammy Yarmon, director of Nutrition services at Omaha Public Schools stated, “USDA provides the regulations for child nutrition programs in all schools in the U.S. We are required to follow the meal pattern, e.g. the fruit and vegetable. Students are not required to take the entree or the milk. For example, a student could take two fruits, vegetables and a milk. Or a piece of pizza and fruit. The pizza counts as two items.”

The problem with these regulations is that students only have to take the food, not eat it. This leads to children throwing away foods they didn’t want in the first place. When asked if



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Lunchroom trash cans fill with trays and food during a lunch period.

students should be required to take foods at school, Maryrose Bartek-Miller from Duchesne Academy stated, “It should be the student’s choice to take a fruit or vegetable or not. If the students aren’t eating enough fruits and vegetables, that’s their own fault. Forcing students and especially small children to take vegetables they don’t want creates a lot of unnecessary food waste.”

Something to consider about food waste is the legislature surrounding it. Only five states have passed laws to combat food waste, and those are California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont.

When asked if she believed that the government was doing enough to fight food waste, Ann Carlson stated, “They don’t do anything to help create waste laws.” She believes that if society wants to expunge food waste, the government needs to take more action.

All hope is not lost for a cut in food waste. A lot of people actively try to stop wasting large amounts of food. When asked what he and his family do to prevent food waste, Henry Billig stated, “We try to use all food before expiration dates, along with saving leftovers and eating them the next day. We make sure to seal everything after it’s been opened in a plastic bag or with a plastic bag clip.”



Chloe Johnson | The Register

Noa Cohen (left) and Sterling Duncan hug each other on Central's campus. The pair's friendship came to be after Duncan found Cohen's phone and turned it in to the office.

Lost phone leads to discovery of friendship

Chloe Johnson
staff writer

Everyone knows the feeling. You go to check your messages, but your pocket is lighter than usual. Your phone is gone. After checking all your pockets and your bag, the panic sets in. Now imagine not only is your phone lost but you’re in a foreign country. That’s exactly what happened to Noa Cohen, an Italian foreign exchange student.

“I felt powerless,” Cohen said.

With an especially rough year, of record fights, Devious Licks, and weekly vape-induced fire alarms, it was easy to assume her phone was lost for good. Many students would have quickly taken the phone, switched the sim, and made a few hundred bucks. But lucky for Cohen, the student who found her phone, Sterling Duncan, is not ‘many students’. To most at Central he is known as “The Dancing Kid,” iconic for break-dancing through the hallways during passing period with big, red and black headphones.

“I have a bit of a reputation to uphold,” Duncan said, who wants Central to know that he dances to Disney, but never rap.

Ever since the phone brought them together, the two extroverts hit it off and have stayed in touch ever since. Today, they have each other’s contacts, say hi whenever they meet in the halls, and even occasionally eat lunch together. In a school of nearly 3000 students, being tight with the school celebrity means a lot to Cohen.

“When I got here everyone was normal and then I saw him, and he was like from a movie,” Cohen said. “Then I actually met him, and I felt like I was in the movie. I feel like everyone knows him so when he talks to me it’s a big thing for me.”

The infamous senior says he has turned in four phones in his time at Central, but Cohen was the first to make any effort towards gratitude.

“When I was called into the office to get my phone, I asked them ‘Who found it, who found it?’ because I really needed to say thank you,” Cohen recalled. “Then they called me to the office again eighth period, and he was there so I just told him thank you, thank you, thank you.”

However, she did not feel that words were enough, so the next school day she brought him a bag of chocolates and a \$50 Starbucks gift card. This hit home for Duncan.

“My mom bent her back to get us what we wanted but when I was younger, my family was always broke, so if I wanted sweets, I would steal them from the store. When I saw how hard my mom was working that’s what inspired me to always be good,” he shared.

While the gift was much appreciated, it was never the incentive for Duncan. His motivation came from a place of deep integrity.

“Someone’s phone is worth more than a thousand dollars and if I’m going to sell the phone for just a few hundred bucks, how much of a scumbag does that make me?” Duncan asks. “The good you put out into the world comes back to you.”

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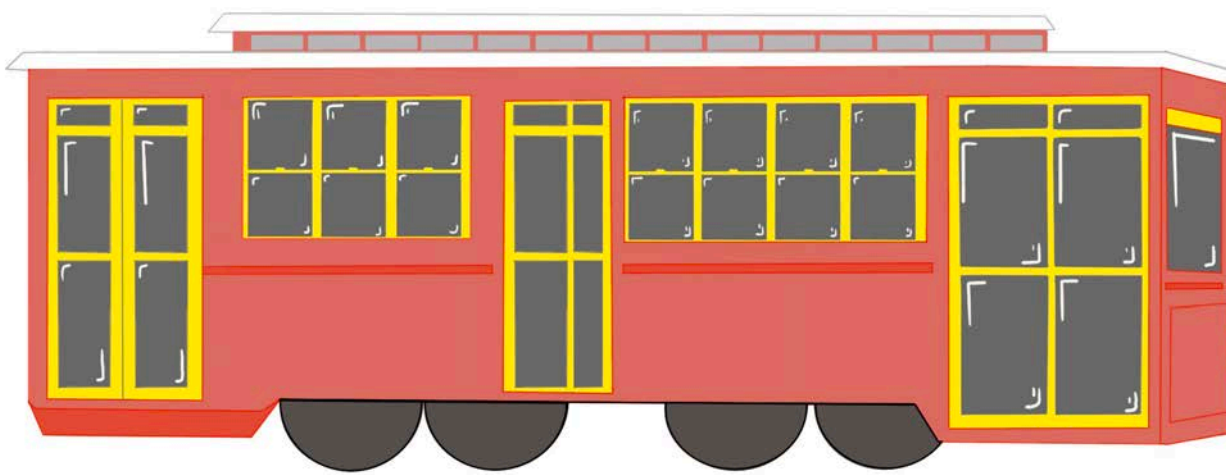
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opinion

STREETCAR= POOR INVESTMENT

Omaha plans to develop a streetcar to add to the public transportation options. While somewhat exciting, the city's money would be better spent elsewhere.



ELLA NOVAK | The Register

Noemi Gilbert
staff writer

Omaha recently announced its intention to build a streetcar around downtown Omaha. While streetcars can serve as a tool for economic advancement, they are ineffective for quick, convenient transportation. Though the plan has benefits (any new car-free transit infrastructure is exciting), the streetcar is not an efficient development, and the money that would be spent on it would be better invested elsewhere.

The planned streetcar route spans from 10th to Saddle Creek. It would connect Blackstone and UNMC to the downtown area. While greater connections between communities can be positive, these transportation routes are already serviced by ORBT and Metro buses. ORBT runs down Dodge and Douglas, Route 15 travels down Farnam and Harney and Route 11 traverses Leavenworth. The area the streetcar would serve is already relatively dense with public transportation options, whereas other areas in Omaha have a dearth of transit.

Omaha is in dire need of a rapid transit service from north to south. ORBT, though it is not perfect, provides quick transportation across an east-west axis. The logical next step is building a rapid transit line between North and South Omaha, making travel between those locations more convenient. If the city is planning to invest in transportation, we should focus on areas that are currently underserved, like travel from north to south.

Along with investing in rapid north-south transit, Omaha should expand its bus lines further West to serve suburbs like Millard and Elkhorn. There are only four bus routes that serve

areas west of 120th street. There is one bus line that serves the Papillion/La Vista area. If the city is going to invest money in transit, we should expand our bus lines so they are more accessible for people from all over the city.

The streetcar will be funded using tax-increment financing, or TIF. TIF works by loaning money to new developments that are expected to raise the property values of land around the development. The increased property taxes of the surrounding land will pay back the loan. Most TIF loans have to be repaid after 15 years, however, designating an area as "extremely blighted" gives developers an extra five years to repay the loans. The hope with the "extremely blighted" designation is that TIF can be used to vitalize traditionally underserved areas. The area between Blackstone and downtown is not "extremely blighted" - it has been gentrified several times and rent prices for businesses and homes are extremely high in Blackstone specifically. TIF money intended for underserved areas should be used for economic development in areas that need it, not a streetcar in a corridor that gets a new trendy neighborhood every couple of years.

One exciting element of the streetcar is that it will be free, at least initially. It can ease traffic downtown and provide another option for public transportation for residents and tourists alike. Visitors who arrive in Omaha for the College World Series could benefit from the streetcar's proximity to both T.D. Ameritrade Park and many downtown hotels. The streetcar is not a bad decision for Omaha, per se, but our money could have been better invested elsewhere to better strengthen Omaha's public transportation.

Pathways detrimental to students, restrict choices

Shyla Youngs
staff writer

Central, like many other OPS schools, will look a lot different next year.

With the implementation of both block scheduling and pathways, students will have one fewer class period. In the grand scheme of things, this might not seem like a huge loss. However, this will restrict students from exploring their interests while in high school.

Oftentimes, that's what kids are told to do in this four-year period: to try new things and hopefully figure out what they want to do with the rest of their lives. Having such strict limitations on electives makes this process harder.

The pathways program will also affect electives. Come freshman year, students will be expected to pick their decided pathway in which all electives, except for universal electives, will focus on that decided choice. This means students will be forced to take electives that they don't care about and have no real interest in.

I had the chance to sit in on a meeting with one of the pathway department heads and talk about the plans for classes next year. The way things are set out now for this upcoming school year scares many students for their academic futures.

For example, I was informed that next year Journalism 1-2 will be integrated with Newspaper 1-2. Normally, students get the opportunity and an introduction to somewhat experience what being on a student publication would be like before deciding to join newspaper or yearbook. But next year this will completely change as students with no experience in these classes, or really any sure knowledge that they will enjoy their pathways, will be thrown directly into the mix.

Along with this, yearbook will only be available as a universal elective, which means only students who can make it fit in their much more restricted schedules can join.

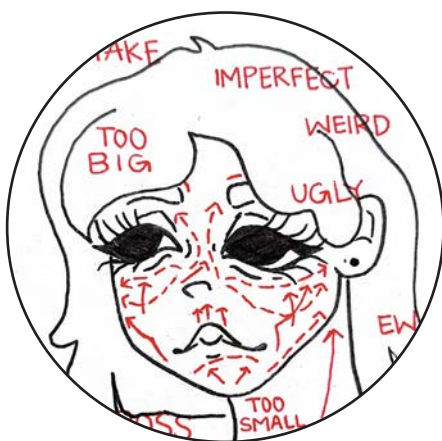
This is only regarding one small aspect of the vast electives Central has to offer. But even looking at one small portion, the changes being made can be seen as damaging instead of beneficial. These same premises will apply to everyone across the board, regardless of which pathway students choose.

The pathways were put into place without considering the stress and other emotions this could bring upon students. Not only is it extremely overwhelming to choose one thing to focus on for your entire high school experience, but it also makes students less willing to try new things because they aren't given the opportunity to.

Some of my best experiences at Central were taking a wide variety of electives. It took many trials and errors, and almost a year to figure out what I want to do at a higher level. I can't imagine deciding that immediately as I entered school, and I know other people have expressed the same feelings.

I mean, even people who attend some form of university switch their major. The current average is around 80 percent of college students switch their major at least once. The key word is at least. Right now, students will only be able to change their pathways once. And again, with a limited amount and selection of pathways, this makes the probability of students finding out their real interests even more slim.

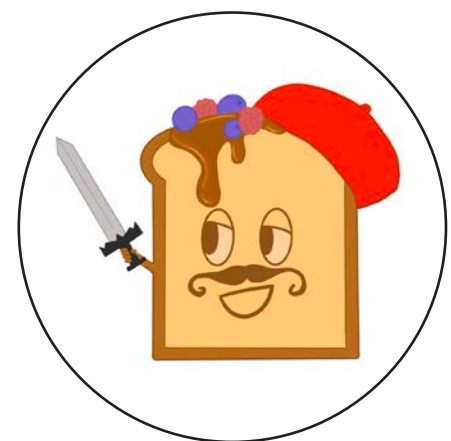
Change isn't always bad, but when it sets unnecessary constraints on students and limits what they can try, it is extremely damaging. The district needs to consider what this will mean for students specifically and think about us before themselves.



PLASTIC SURGERY on page 8



REMOTE on page 9



BREAKFAST on page 10

Seahawks need fixing after rare 2021 season performance

Jaden Cheloha
staff writer

I have been an avid Seattle Seahawks fan since 2014, and we haven't seen many lost seasons. There was 2017, where they just missed the playoffs, but they still finished with a winning record. That is why the 2021 season was such a punch in the gut to many, just as a 7-10 finish is expected to do. Some fans overreacted, some fans interpreted this season as a complete fluke and the rest are somewhere in the middle. While there were some issues that occurred that were out of the hands of either players or coaches, this year should have taught this franchise a lot regarding how they should approach the offseason. I am then here to discuss my thoughts and opinions on how Seattle could do just this.

The best place to start is at the top, with the coaching staff. It's important to mention here that the Seahawks are already moving on from their defensive coordinator, Ken Norton Jr., after he was fired on Jan. 18. With a revamp coming to the defense soon, it's time to turn our attention to the other two men currently under fire: Shane Waldron and Pete Carroll. Even though our offense was sluggish to say the best, I'm confident that the growing pains of a first-year offensive coordinator in Waldron will wear away with time. If problems remain, however, that's when a proper evaluation will need to be done.

However, Waldron hasn't been the most controversial coach this year. That title goes to the previously mentioned Pete Carroll, who, as the oldest coach in the league, some are saying is starting to show his age. While it might be true that his style of offense is getting a little outdated for a team like the Seahawks to run, I think his tenure as our head coach should boil down to if this level of mediocre play is brought into next season. If so, just like Waldron, that is truly when Carroll should be placed on the hot seat. As of right now, I say give them one more year to (hopefully) get their system fully fleshed out.

Along with last year, there are also rumors regarding the future of Russell Wilson. While significant draft capital could be accrued from a trade involving Wilson, I don't think Seattle is ready just yet to put all their eggs into a rebuild-focused basket. This also goes for other players that could possibly get them a decent return in trade talks, with a prime example being Bobby Wagner.

With some key decisions already made regarding some of our most valuable players, it is important to now address some key free agents. Luckily for Seattle, they have somewhere around \$50 million in projected cap space to work with, so retaining most of their stars will be quite easy. There are four big names that should be considered must-signs, and they are safety Quandre Diggs, running back Rashaad Penny, left tackle Duane Brown, and cornerback D.J. Reed. There are plenty more role-players who the Seahawks might also like to retain, but these

four are my picks for the Seattle's greatest priority.

There are obvious guys here that seem very deserving of new contracts, and some that people reading this might be scratching their heads at. To start with the obvious, even though Quandre Diggs is still recovering from a broken fibula and dislocated ankle, his value to this team is still far beyond what many expected when we acquired him back in 2019. He has been selected to two pro bowls and received a few All-pro votes since being traded from the Detroit Lions and has grown into quite the bright spot on an inconsistent defense. A 2-to-3-year extension for Diggs is one of the biggest no-brainers of the Seahawks' offseason.

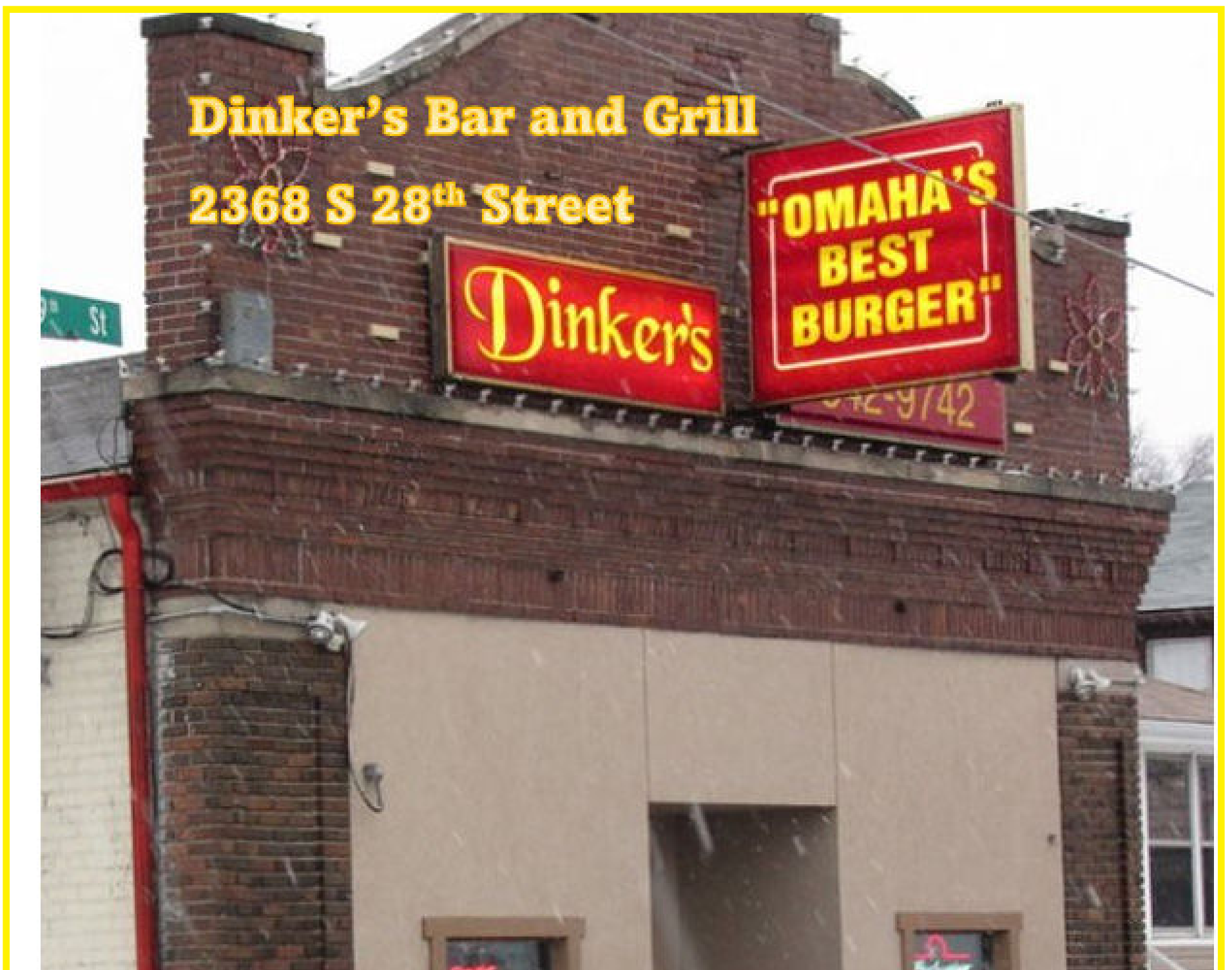
However, an argument regarding Penny might need to be made for some more skeptical fans. Of course, the team has Chris Carson under contract until the end of next season, but with Penny finally putting up first round running back numbers in the latter half of the season (and the chance Carson can stay healthy next year), then Seattle could have one of the most dynamic running back duos in the league. The rest of these free agents are simply Seattle's best option at their respective position, with Penny having a stellar latter half of the season, Brown still being an all-around solid tackle, and D.J. Reed being one of the team's best corners for the past 2 seasons.

The only things left to cover now would be other free agent signings and the draft. It's nowhere near surprising anymore to say Seattle still has issues on the offensive line they need to flesh out. Russell Wilson missed 3 whole games and was still in the top 15 in sacks this year, so centers and a right tackle would be great targets. Of course, they could resign their current center, Ethan Pocic, but even if they decide to go that route, I will prefer to see the Seahawks set him up with some competition, either through a draft

pick or a cheap signing.

Another area in need of attention is their secondary. While Quandre Diggs and Jamal Adams are an amazing safety duo, the Seahawks truly don't have a #1 corner. This is why resigning Reed is so important, but that's also why pursuing other names is just as important. Options include Kyle Fuller of the Denver Broncos, Patrick Peterson of the Minnesota Vikings, or Chris Harris of the Los Angeles Chargers. These are all veterans who could make an immediate impact on the team, as well as act as mentors for both younger players and rookies (if Seattle uses one of their current 6 picks on secondary help).

This offseason will truly be a wade into deeper waters for this franchise. A season as rare as 2021 for the Seahawks should be evaluated and approached much more carefully than previous years. I've given my two cents on possible decisions for Seattle, but it will all eventually come down to the front office and what they think is best for this team. This season was truly a lackluster sight, but that just gives me more hope for the next.



Plastic surgery discourages self-acceptance

Elena Correa
section editor

In the last decade or so, plastic surgery has spread like a parasite. For the most popular of celebrities, the idols of the American and global public, appearance altering surgery is common. Women especially use plastic surgery to reach a certain level of perfection or attractiveness through it.

They shrink their waists, pay for liposuction, ask for Botox in their faces and get fillers in their lips. The list goes on. The goal of these surgeries is to feed off the insecurities of vulnerable people.

A common theme with these plastic surgeries is getting as close as physically possible to white European features. Hair removal and face contour are just two examples. Another more troubling example is nose jobs.

Large or hooked noses do not fit into the traditional European beauty standard. Men and women alike are so self-conscious of them that nose reconstruction has developed a market. The goal is to have a petite, short and straight nose to be considered beautiful.

People who aren't the beauty standard have been altering their appearance for centuries to meet them, but nose reconstructions are an especially sad result. The process is painful, takes months to heal and looks traumatic to the body. Blood and bruising are a natural part of the process.

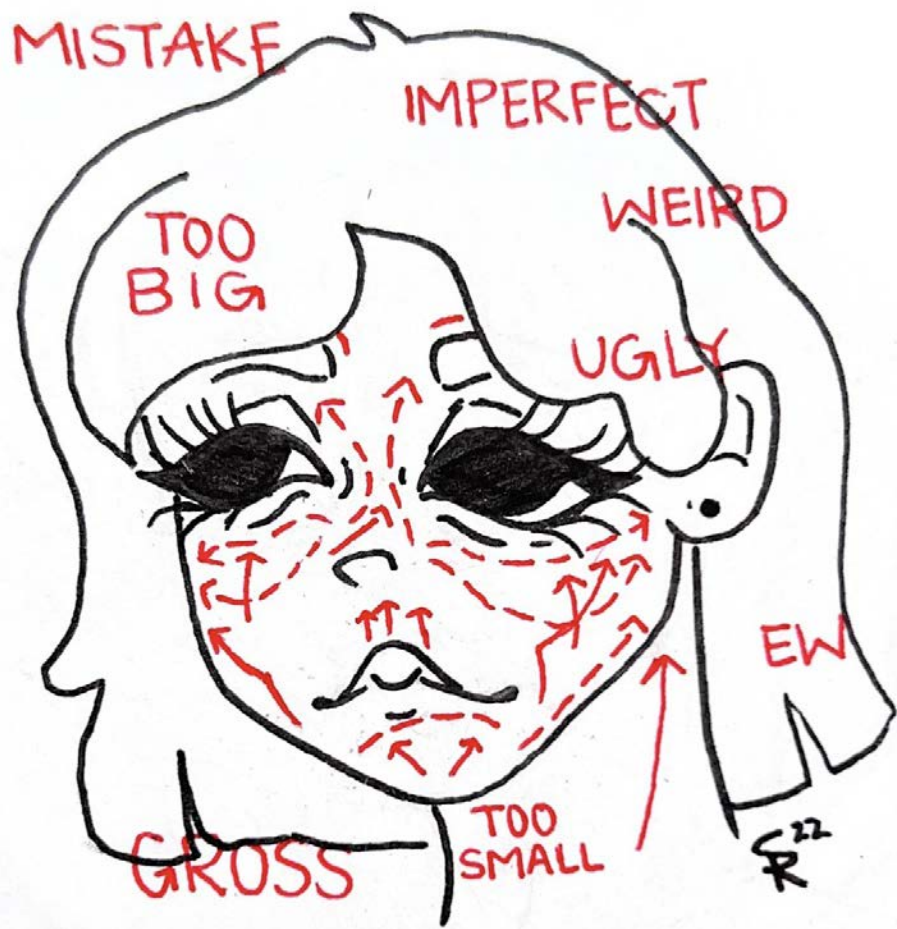
The procedure is expensive and permanent. Patients are changing their appearances, the physical history of all the people before them, their family, for the rest of their lives.

The idea that so many people would do something so extreme should be concerning, and as a society we should be rethinking our values. At no point should any person feel so uncomfortable with themselves, arguably hating themselves, that they seek out permanent plastic surgery to forever alter their natural appearance.

There is a pro-plastic surgery side of the issue, or rather people who would say to let people do whatever makes them happy without criticism. I don't totally disagree with that, but why aren't we asking ourselves why that would make someone happy?

When it boils down, isn't getting a nose job to "fix" your curved nose just trying to be closer to whiteness? Is that not the beauty standard? Should we really say nothing while people permanently alter their appearances, which are naturally beautiful, to be happy according to standards that will eventually change?

Instead of that we should be pushing for self-acceptance. No one should support someone else's hate for themselves, even if their intention is good. People deserve to be comfortable in their own skin, and no one's natural features need altering.



SAM ROBLES | Contributing Cartoonist

Identity representation in media stereotypical, one-sided

Anja Kovačević
staff writer

The media has always had a profound influence on how people look at the world, the people in it and themselves. The things presented in the media can help the viewers understand cultures, people, and religions both similar and different to them. Ethnic-racial representation is something that many people look for in the media but can't always seem to find. Representation is often overlooked in many aspects, but the truth is that its importance is non-negotiable.

The benefits of representation are life changing for many. In a country as diverse as America, it's a shame that kids who don't fit the typical American identity don't get to see themselves represented. Often, when young kids don't see their race or ethnicity in the media, they don't get a chance to realize how truly special and valued their identity is.

The main thought in young kids' minds is how they can fit in with their peers, and a parent's words can only go so far to show their child how special they are. They want to show them that having something that makes them "different" from other kids is a strength instead of a weakness. When kids don't get a chance to realize this, there's a risk of them carrying a feeling of being inferior and a need to fit in with them into adulthood.

Whether people like it or not, the influence the media has on the world is drastic. The hold it has on the country includes things from politics to movies. If the media is such an influential part of most people's lives, shouldn't it be making a positive impact? Media and the internet are continuing to affect younger and younger children, and it's not always beneficial to them.

Kids are in a crucial part of developing their minds, thoughts, and ideas about themselves and others. This can be difficult to do when they are seeing the world through the media's lens. This is why it's so important for kids to have something to relate to. Kids want to look up to someone. When they are watching their favorite cartoon or movie, they want to be able to see themselves in their favorite characters. Unfortunately, many kids don't get this luxury. The representation of different groups and people is increasingly beneficial for a positive social and personal life.

Representation in the media today is one sided. Instead of showing the beauty of certain ethnic groups, they're painted as outlaws, criminals, and in negative lights just because they aren't the majority. This negative portrait can be detrimental to the viewer's outlook on themselves and their appreciation for others. It is so exhausting to constantly see people who are like you being painted with dishonor, and it doesn't allow you to be proud but rather annoyed.

The world of cinema is constantly assigning carefully picked out characteristics to certain groups of people and is inferring to an unknowing viewer that these are accurate reflections of the people being portrayed. Actors who are ethnic minorities or people of color, are often made to portray their character in a stereotypical light. Sometimes the character is even washed down to be accommodating to white or non-relating people in order to prevent making anyone uncomfortable. But what's uncomfortable about showing the ranges of life from all around the world?

The media isn't the only place where representation is needed. Schools are also an extremely important environment. Schools are a place for all kids to have a chance to receive an education. A school with enough representation can fuel the success of the student body. When students don't feel different from their peers, especially in schools struggling with lack of diversity, a door is opened to all kinds of possibilities. An environment allowing kids that deal with stereotypes and prejudices everyday to have a truly equal chance, results in the world getting millions of success stories.

Representation of all people, no matter color, ethnicity, or home country is needed to create a country that can truly be "for the people." If the number of harmful stereotypes being made into a casual part of life were even slightly decreasing, these hurtful notions wouldn't be pushed onto the public as strongly.

Why should people just have to deal with feeling inferior in their own country? An increase in positive representation wouldn't get rid of hatred powered by stereotypes but would significantly decrease it. The media truly controls everything, and the last thing needed in this world is more hate. It's important to have outlets where all voices are heard and amplified. In a world this diverse and multicultural, there are so many ideas and beauties that could benefit humanity as a whole.

Representation of all people, no matter color, ethnicity, or home country is needed to create a country that can truly be "for the people."



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Remote learning option should be available for OPS students



ETTA SALZMAN | Contributing Cartoonist

Charlie Palmer
staff writer

Ever since the second semester of school started, it seemed like everyone I knew was getting Covid. It could not have been a coincidence that winter break had just ended, and people were coming back to school. In fact, this was occurring all over the nation. Covid-19 cases dramatically increased for the first couple weeks after the new year, even hitting a record of 1.35 million cases in the United States in one day.

Although the spread has generally slowed from the chaos it was, I realized that this pandemic still presents the same level of danger it did last year. Last year there was the option for students to stay home from school and learn remotely through their iPads, but not this year.

Considering the magnitude of spreading cases among Central and the rest of the Omaha community, I think the students who want to stay home should have the option to do so. I do not think the 3/2 model or fully online format of school matched everyone's preference, so just giving the option to learn remotely would help.

For some students, going to school in this pandemic means having to gamble on the lives of their family members every day. Immunocompromised and older people, among many other groups, cannot risk being exposed to Covid-19, as they have a much higher chance of dying if they are infected. Some students must go to school and come home to their families that include these high-risk people.

This obviously does not apply to every person in the school but still should not be ignored, as every family situation is unique and deserves to be noticed. In addition, Covid cases in general will decrease as there will be less people to spread it at school and certain families will be more isolated from the pandemic. Online learning will combat Covid-19 and shorten the time we all must wait before a fully normal learning environment can finally return.

Bringing back online learning can be tough for many teachers who are already trying their best to allocate for each student's needs during this tough time. However, I truly believe that balance between in-person and remote learning can be achieved through everyone's continued hard work in OPS. In order to fight this pandemic will full force, online learning needs to be an option for students.

CHLOE JOHNSON | The Register

Tips to Help Winter Blues



buy some houseplants

create something

use LED bulbs

keep a regular sleep schedule

work by an open window

watch a nostalgic movie

bake something new

eat foods rich in vitamin D

go for a walk

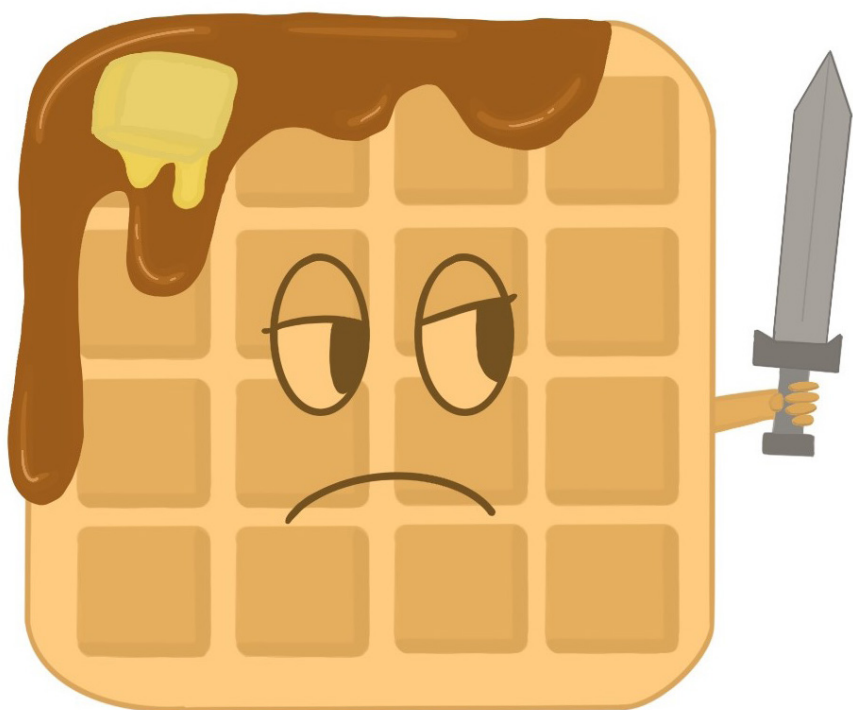
wear a colorful piece of clothing

call a friend

exercise outside

BREAKFAST BATTLE

It's common knowledge that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. The controversial debate, however, lies in the answer to this question: French toast or waffles?



Daniel Graham
staff writer

French toast is the best breakfast food out there, and it is, without a doubt, far superior to waffles. French toast is the food of the people, while waffles are the food of the elitists.

Let's start with the cooking process of these two breakfast foods. French toast only requires a skillet for cooking, which is a common cooking appliance with many uses. Waffles, on the other hand, require an iron.

The waffle iron is for elitists. It is a single-use cooking appliance. You can only cook one thing in a waffle iron. Unless you're having waffles far too often, you're only using your iron once a month—if that—which makes it incredibly specialized for a food that isn't all that good.

French toast, on the other hand, is the food of the people. Not only is it made using a multi-use cooking appliance, but it is also designed to use up old bread, while waffles require you to mix up a whole new batter.

French toast will cook much faster than waffles will, not to mention the fact that it is far easier to clean a skillet than it is a waffle iron. If you're making waffles at a hotel breakfast bar, you're going to be eating a little bit of everyone else's waffles too.

With French toast, once you've started the cooking process, you have a lot more control over how you want your food done, because you can easily check it without messing it up, unlike with a waffle iron, where one ill-timed peek can ruin your breakfast.

Now, let's look at flavor, starting with the two breakfast foods in their most basic forms, without any additional toppings—not even syrup. Waffles bring only their typical bread flavor, while French toast, with its egg batter, brings its own flavor along for the ride.

What's more, waffles on their own do not measure up to French toast in terms of texture. They are either dry or squishy, never especially desirable, whereas French toast consistently has a crisp exterior with a soft bread interior. Though syrup improves the flavor and texture both of these foods, it's doing a whole lot more work on waffles than it is on French toast.

Now, it must be said that waffles are a

versatile breakfast food. They can come with any number of shapes and flavorings, and they can even be made into an entirely different meal, with chicken and waffles. However, French toast's versatility is quite underrated.

It is true that French toast cannot really compete with waffles in the different shapes department, but it must be noted that each of those shapes requires an entirely new waffle iron. If you're desperate for a breakfast food that comes in a circle instead of a square—and of course, if you have the money—the purchase might be worth it, but otherwise, you'll be stuck eating food that's only one shape, just like everyone else.

Though you cannot add as many flavorings inside the French toast as you can with waffles, you can add almost all of them as toppings instead, which gives you the same taste, though in a somewhat less exciting format.

French toast can also be made into different meals, as it can be made into a savory dish by swapping out sugar in the egg batter for salt and pepper and adding any number of savory toppings. This is a dish that is far

better than any savory combination that waffles have to offer.

It must be noted that this is not a slight at chicken and waffles, because that meal is traditionally served with syrup,

which means that it is not a dish that turns waffles into a savory meal, rather it turns chicken into a sweet one.

Finally, there is one form with which waffles simply cannot compete: stuffed French toast. You simply cannot stuff a waffle full of goodness in the way that you can with French toast.

A waffle sandwich is not the same; it does not have the same compact, cohesiveness that stuffed French toast does, and you cannot add syrup or other toppings, because you need to be able to pick it up, unless you intend to take on the monumental task of attempting to cut through two waffles while keeping the sandwich intact.

French toast is clearly a better breakfast food than waffles. Waffles may not even be top five (I personally have pancakes and crepes ahead of them, and I see a strong case for some of the savory breakfast foods to get in there as well), while French toast, the breakfast food of the people, is pushing for the top spot.

Callan Maher
staff writer

Now I won't lie and say that waffles are the best breakfast food ever because that would be arrogant, but I will say that they are better than French toast. Waffles are homey, comfortable and there is something about the vibe that making and eating waffles give off that French toast cannot compete with. Waffles are easy to make and satisfy the need for good comfort food.

An important point to make is that the average time it takes to make waffles is 10 minutes shorter than French toast. According to the Food Network the total time it takes to make French toast is 30 minutes and the total time for waffles is 20 minutes. Now this is important because the average person does not have a lot of

extra time in their morning routine so being able to save 10 extra minutes while still having a tasty breakfast is important. The cleanup time for both the breakfast foods is about the same because they require around the same number of supplies.

Now both waffles and French toast are great, but I must address taste and texture. I won't lie, I can't critique the taste of a well make French toast because it is good, but the texture is where it can fall short. Unlike the waffles light and fluffy texture, French toast tends to turn soggy and heavy due to having to soak in the egg and milk mixture. Waffles tend to be more reliable with both crispy and soft texture and a hint of sweetness in the taste.

The actual shape of breakfast food plays a large role in the overall enjoyment of eating them. Waffles are made to be able to hold all the toppings someone wishes to add. With the grooves made by the iron, the toppings can be evenly distributed and held in place. While with French toast, the butter and syrup tend to pool on the surface then go all over the place once they

are cut or bit into.

A person can also have more variety with the shape of their waffles by buying fun waffles irons, something you can sadly not do with French toast.

Speaking of waffles irons, they themselves are not single use. There are multiple other recipes that people can make that use waffles irons such as grilled cheese, calzones, cinnamon rolls, hash browns and more.

Not only does the shape of waffles have more variety but so does the waffle itself. Although it is possible to make both French toast and waffles sweet or savory, it is far easier with waffles. For French Toast, you have to change the recipe itself by adding different spices to the mixture it soaks in, but for waffles, the original recipe can be used or changes can be made.

For a sweet waffle, the toppings can be:

powdered sugar, fruit, syrups, honey, Nutella, whip cream and more. Or the recipe can be changed by adding vanilla or cinnamon to the batter.

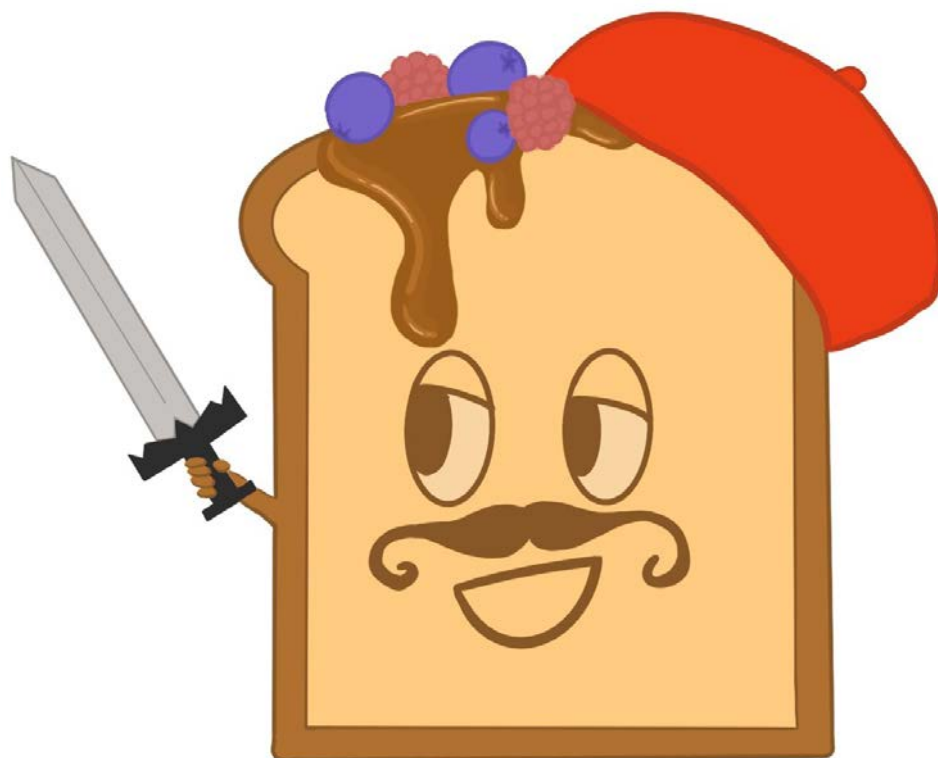
Sweet French toast

and waffles are the more common way to go when eating those foods but that does not change the fact that there are some great savory waffle choices.

For a savory waffle, the toppings can be: fried chicken, eggs, meats, tomatoes with balsamic glaze, avocado and more. Because the flavor of the waffle on its own is not overly sweet these toppings nicely balance the sweetness. Adding herbs such as basil, rosemary and thyme to the batter is another way to make the waffles savory. Adding these herbs complements the already great flavor foundation that waffles provide.

Waffles may not be the absolute best breakfast food, but they are comforting and delicious. They are better than French toast, maybe just one ranking above, but still above. French toast cannot compete with the homey feeling waffles provide and the delicate sweetness they carry.

There is something about the vibe of making and eating waffles that French toast cannot compete with.



arts & style

DRAMA STUDENTS ATTEND FESTIVAL

Central's thespian troupe spent a weekend developing their theatrical skills at the Nebraska Thespian Festival.



Photos Courtesy of **CENTRAL DRAMA**

Left: Central Drama students at the annual banquet. Right: Sophia Detisch, Pretzel Urwin, Joseph Warren-Pasley, Maura Durfee O'Brien, Brodie Urwin and E Dona Munoz compete on improv team.

Noemi Gilbert
staff writer

Each year, theatre students from all over Nebraska gather at the Nebraska Thespian Festival to watch shows, present pieces they've been working on, attend workshops, connect with colleges and much more. From Jan. 6-8, Central drama students attended the festival. Four students earned superior awards, the tech team placed in third and the banner created to represent Central drama placed first.

Sophomore Amy Fischer is Central's stage manager and the ITS clerk for Central Drama. She won a superior award for her stage management. "It signaled that I was doing something right when stage managing a show," Fischer said.

The Nebraska Thespian Festival has a wide variety of workshops participants attend on topics as diverse as stage combat, career advice, dance, playwriting and stage management. Stage management is the organization of the backstage

and onstage elements of a show. Fischer attended a workshop with other student stage managers from all over Nebraska. "I had never been around a group that all had interest in the same job that I do, so it was amazing to hear about their experience," she said.

Junior Brodie Urwin has attended the Nebraska Thespian Festival twice now. He enjoyed watching musical performances, attending workshops and competing as part of the improv team. One of his favorite workshops was on the topic of rendering and design.

"I found it really fun," he said. "It was about how to use different media for set designs and costume designs." At Central, Urwin participates in drama as an actor, student director, publicity crew head and treasurer.

Both Fischer and Urwin enjoyed attending a small-group workshop on diversity, equity and inclusion. "We discussed how we could improve the theaters that we worked in," Fischer said. "I want to find a space at Central to use as a dressing

room for those in the department that don't identify as male or female."

"Something that I'll bring back to Central, especially onto the stage, is not only entertaining the audience but teaching them about diversity," Urwin added.

The Nebraska Thespian Festival is more than theater workshops and competitions: it is an opportunity for theater departments from around the state to socialize, and an opportunity for individual theater departments to build friendships with each other. The karaoke night is a favorite activity for many attendees.

"You get together with everyone at the festival and you get to hang out and sing songs and dance," Urwin said. "It's kind of like a homecoming but more fun."

Fischer also enjoyed the bonding activities with her fellow festival attendees. "It was nice to feel like a teenager," she said. "The memories that we created are ones that I treasure deeply."

New Year's resolutions vary among students, teachers

Claire Shafer
staff writer

For many, the New Year represents a clean slate, new beginning or fresh start. The new year creates an opportunity to look back and correct the mistakes made in previous years by setting goals or resolutions to fix them in the new year. According to the Washington Post, a New Year's resolution is a "decision to do or not do something to accomplish a personal goal or break a habit." New Year's resolutions are ways to express what we wish for through goals that will make us better. Setting goals shows the optimism and desire for wanting positive change in one's life.

New Year's traditions and resolutions are extremely prevalent in America's pop-culture and modern society. However, New Year's celebrations and traditions began long ago. These resolutions came from the Babylonians over 4,000 years ago. The Babylonians celebrated the beginning of a new year with an eleven day festival. During the festival, they would make promises to the gods, hoping for good luck in the upcoming year. Eventually these promises turned into what is known today as New Year's resolutions.

Most New Year's resolutions are personal goals that will make positive, beneficial changes like saving money, exercising more, spending more time with loved ones or taking up a new

hobby. When asking students at Central what their New Year's resolutions are, the most common answers include staying on top of school work and getting better at a sport.

"My goal is to drink more water and stay in shape for sports," freshman Kyra Fry said. Other students have goals to be happier, to keep a journal and to be organized.

"My resolutions are to smile more and have a consistent morning and nighttime routine," said sophomore Ella Easton. Other students have very different views on New Year's resolutions. Some claim that New Year's resolutions are just excuses to procrastinate changing.

"You can change yourself for the better anytime of the year. Why not start when you have the idea to change?" sophomore Aubrey Victor said.

When interviewing Central staff members about their goals for this year, the hope for staying healthy during the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic was a popular response.

Central staff members focused on staying healthy and well when entering the third year of the pandemic.

"I want to focus on health and wellness more this year," English teacher, Matthew Kabel said. Other teachers have goals to keep students engaged and excited during school.

"This year, my goal is to keep track of students' birthdays," says girls cross country coach and English teacher, Martha Omar. She hopes that her New Year's resolution will make her students feel more involved and appreciated at school.



PAGEANTS on page 12



SPIDERMAN REVIEW on page 13



FÚ ASIAN GRILL on page 14



Photo Courtesy of ALEX FERREYA

Alex Ferreyra has won Miss Teen Nebraska Latina and POA Miss Teen Nebraska. She enjoys speaking on her platform about neonatal rescue kittens.

Junior uses pageantry to improve life skills, help community

Ella Novak
staff writer

Junior Alexa Ferreyra has had five years of experience in pageantry. Currently, she holds the title of ARB Miss Teen Nebraska and in the past has held multiple titles including Miss Teen Nebraska Latina and POA Miss Teen Nebraska.

Pageants consist of the scoring of many different factors. "There are events like gown, introduction, interview but usually the scoring depends on the specific pageant," said Ferreyra.

One of the biggest 'prizes' for winning a pageant is the title that they get. Pageant titles are the names that the pageant winner is referred to as. For example, Miss America is probably one of most well know titles. On top of titles, they also get crowns and sashes to wear.

Winning a title also comes with benefits on top of just getting called that

"You get to participate in parades, in opportunities to help the community and you also get to travel," Ferreyra said. Travel opportunities can span all over the world and often are because of the winners going to events like nationals.

Part of being able to win these pageants is practice.

"Being in pageants takes up a lot of time and energy," said Ferreyra. "You have to practice your interview, your walking and you have to speak in front of an audience without messing up."

Communication skills are an important part of pageant scoring. "Pageants have helped me with interview skills, and they have also helped me with social skills because there is such a focus on communication in pageantry," Ferreyra said.

"I like being able to express myself through pageants. I also love being able to help my community," Ferreyra reflected. "Getting to know people from different states who share the same interest in pageants as me is really exciting and one of my favorite parts too."

"I started doing pageants when I realized I wanted to talk about my platform," explained Ferreyra, "which is helping rescue kittens, especially neonatal kittens to get adopted."

Her favorite part of taking care of foster kittens is "being able to take care of cute kittens and being able to help them from when they're super young."

Pageantry does not come without its challenges. "It's nerve racking to talk to so many different people," said Ferreyra. But even though it can be nerve racking, the rewards for doing well in the events and winning the pageant are plentiful.

Interest in justice system leads teen to court volunteering

Lea Langner
staff writer

Junior Jack Adrian has been volunteering for Sarpy County Teen Court for the past month. After it was recommended to him by a classmate, he started participating because of his passion for the justice system.

"I want to go into local law enforcement because I have an interest in public service," he said. "I've grown up in Omaha all my life and I want to contribute to a better and more positive system where we can collaborate and create a community that everyone can safely coexist in."

Jack, who plans to study criminal justice in college, believes participating in teen court is useful for his career aspirations.

"It's a way for me to look at different career opportunities within the justice system because whatever role you serve as in teen court gives you a small perspective of what it would be like as an adult," he said.

The first time he participated in teen court, he served on the jury where his main job was to listen and take in all the facts of the case. He has also served as the bailiff, keeping track of the charges given and mediating the court.

"I personally like being the bailiff better because I'm not making the decision about what the defendant will have to face and I'm able to make sure everyone is heard and the court is running smoothly," he said. "There's less pressure."

Despite there being less pressure, Jack acknowledges the importance of his role and how serious the court process is.

"One thing they really enforce is that it's not a mock trial, it's not fake," he said. "The cases are real, the punishment is real, and it takes place in a legitimate courtroom."

Jack believes teen court allows teens who have committed crimes like possession of illegal

drug paraphernalia, or minor misdemeanors to start fresh and leave their past behind.

"It's a way for them to avoid a system where they are set up to fail and repeatedly make bad decisions," he said.

Along with the defendants in the cases he participates in, Jack also feels he is being set up for success because of teen court.

"It gives me an opportunity to experience what the justice system is like and also gives me some practice with public speaking which is a good skill to have," he said. "It's also really good for my resume and since I do want to study criminal justice, it's just one more thing I'll have under my belt."

After being an active part of the court process, Jack has been able to gain a sense of empathy for those who end up in teen court along with a new perspective that he believes will help him with his future in law enforcement.

"Listening to the defendants makes me understand that they aren't dangerous criminals, they are just people like me, only they've made bad decisions," he said. "It is very rewarding because it gives me the opportunity to give back to teens my age who have made bad decisions but still want to turn back and lead good lives".

Jack plans on participating in teen court through his senior year because of the benefits and overall positive experience he has had.

I would one hundred percent recommend teen court to other teens especially if they have an interest in the justice system," he said. "It's a good way to get volunteer hours, the people are nice, and it's just a friendly environment."

While serving as a juror and bailiff for Sarpy County Teen Court, Jack has learned many important things about the court process and acquired skills he hopes to utilize in the future.

"Teen court has been an impactful experience for me and I'm proud to be, and continue to be a part of it," he said.

"Listening to the defendants makes me understand that they aren't dangerous criminals. They are just people like me, only they've made bad decisions"

JACK ADRIAN
JUNIOR

‘Spider-Man: No Way Home’ delightfully empty

Jane McGill
staff writer

Warning: The following review contains major spoilers for Spider-Man: No Way Home. The first sign of the trouble, and of delight, appears pretty early on in the film. After J Jonah Jameson reveals Spider-Man’s identity to the world, Peter, Aunt May, and a number of his friends are hauled in for questioning on their alleged involvement in the attack on London by the government. For their legal counsel they hire none other than Matthew Murdock, Daredevil himself. Wow, he’s in this?! He appeared on screen and I smiled from ear to ear. But then, I remembered how season one of “Daredevil” alone was better than almost every film that Marvel Studios has ever made, and the smile slid off my face. That momentary rush of nostalgia passed, and revealed itself to be devoid of any real narrative drama. Empty moments like these are not only common in this film, but actually comprise its main appeal. Although it contains the heart and humor we have come to expect from the web slinger, “Spider-Man: No Way Home” works far better as a nostalgia trip than as a film.

The plot follows Tom Holland’s Peter Parker as he struggles with the consequences of his identity being revealed to the world while trying to get into college and maintain a healthy relationship with his girlfriend MJ. After his identity as Spider-Man begins to hurt those that he loves, he asks Doctor Strange to cast a spell to make the entire world forget that he is Spider-Man. But, when Strange’s spell goes horribly wrong, Peter Parker must face off dangerous foes from other universes. Why is trying to make the entire world forget that he is Spider-Man Peter Parker’s first move? Why does Doctor Strange agree to do this for him? Because Sony needs to sell movie tickets, and nostalgia is an assured way to do that. As character decisions these are completely nonsensical, and these choices are completely inconsequential in Peter’s arc in the film, so their only purpose is to let loose a bunch of fan favorite characters from previous Spider-Man movies.

More than perhaps any Marvel movie before it, it exquisitely captures the feeling of a child crashing their action figures together. The film gleefully re-introduces almost every major villain from the Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield films. The return of Alfred Molina as Doc Oc and William Dafoe as the Goblin are downright triumphant. Dafoe in particular gives the best performance in the movie, boldly reclaiming his rightful place as Spider-Man’s greatest cinematic antagonist. The inclusion of the Lizard, Electro, and the Sandman are much more bizarre however, as it’s unclear who, if anyone, is nostalgic for those characters. And then, in the third act, Maguire and Garfield themselves return. While both are good in the film, Garfield is shockingly good. The short and simple redemption arc he undergoes is legitimately the best character arc in the film, and his performance here is better than in either of the Spider-Man movies that he starred in. He’s so charming in fact, that he actually overshadows Holland and Maguire.

It’s evident that, if nothing else, this is a film that understands the character of Peter Parker. It succinctly captures the air of downtrodden teenager struggling with everyday problems in the



Photo Courtesy of DESERT NEWS

first act, and while his initial decisions are incomprehensible because his characterization is being sacrificed in the name of plot convenience, his decisions later in the film are much more in line with what audiences love about the character. His running plan throughout the film is not to defeat the villains, but to cure them so that they can have a chance to build better lives when they return to their own universes. This is the kind of compassionate and empathetic course of action that Peter Parker would take, and Holland sells it. Even though his character arc is another tired rehash of the “with great power comes great responsibility” theme that has been done to death and is executed worse here than ever before, Holland reminds us why he is the best Peter Parker we’ve ever had.

The fundamental issue that this film encounters while cramming in characters from the previous onscreen iterations of the Spider-Man: It throws the bland, indistinct nature of “No Way Home” into even starker relief. When Doc Oc arrives on the bridge to fight Spider-Man you get an immediate hit of nostalgia. Then an uninspired, lifeless action sequence starts where a CGI Doctor Octopus throws CGI cars at a CGI Spider-Man, and you remember how engaging and imaginative the action in the Sam Rami movies were and mentally compare them to what you’re sitting through now. This is truly the film where Jon Watts cemented his status as the most boring filmmaker ever to direct a Spider-Man movie. Aside from a few interesting gimmicks near the beginning of the film that seem to parody indie cinema, the direction and cinematography is utterly drab and nondescript. Because at the end of the day, humor, heart, and some engaging performances can’t obscure the reality that the greatest trick that “No Way Home” has up its sleeve is reminding you of other, better movies.

Showtime’s ‘Yellowjackets’ an enticing psychological thriller

Grace Ridgley
section editor

Periods, boy troubles, best friend quarrels and possible cannibalism: the trials and tribulations of the average 90s teenager in a girls’ soccer team. Showtime came out with the first episode of new television show Yellowjackets on Nov. 14. The finale was released on Jan. 16.

This psychological thriller depicts the lives of a New Jersey girls’ soccer team who is stranded in the Canadian Rockies for 19 months. The show is also set in present day where viewers watch as several members of the team must reunite after they start to get blackmailed.

The first season only has the events of when they first arrive to the start of winter, which is about five months. Much is left unknown, but this season sets up the characters and themes of the story.

Throughout it, viewers are being led down the path that

these women were forced to cannibalize their teammates in order to survive, and though they never admit to it, they are being blackmailed with strange symbols and texts for money.

There are many different unique elements at play within Yellowjackets. There is evil with both human and supernatural roots, which makes the story even more interesting.

Yellowjackets intertwines past and present, as well as the backstories of the characters. The cast is a mix of both well-known actresses and newcomers to the industry. It stars Juliette Lewis, Melanie Lynskey and Christina Ricci as the present-day players. The acting is superb—every episode will leave you wanting more.

The show is comparable to another Lord of the Flies-esque thriller, The Wilds. However, Yellowjackets is a much more raw and realistic spin on the tale of survival. Audiences watch as these girls must show their true colors in a time of need.

While the entire season was great, I felt that the final

episode was a bit lackluster. Some of the loose ends were tied up, but a lot was either not explained or brushed over quickly and in a confusing manner. Yellowjackets has signed for a second season where, presumably, we will get more answers about what is really happening.

In addition to the theme of survival, the show delves into different kinds of relationships: both romantic and not. Yellowjackets shows how friendships can evolve and how families can adapt for one another, even in the direst of circumstances. This is what makes it stand out in comparison to other television shows like it.

If you are looking for a mystery and survival show, then Yellowjackets should be next on your watchlist. With the atrocities of high school mixed with survival instincts, the actors on this show will make you wonder what is truly scarier: spooky cannibal spirits or teenage girls.



Photo Courtesy of SPOTIFY

Cordae releases ‘From a Bird’s Eye View’

Charlie Palmer
staff writer

Maryland rapper, singer and songwriter Cordae just dropped his newest full-length album after a three year wait. Cordae entered the rap game in 2017 and has worked with all sorts of musical geniuses including Dr. Dre, who has recently taken him under his wing. His first album, “The Lost Boy”, received widespread acclaim from musical critics and left fans excited to see his growth in future projects.

The flexibility of Cordae’s sound stood out in this album. In some tracks, Cordae is singing out his heart and showing off his impressive vocals, while in others he delivers ruthless rhymes without holding back. The jazzy tone of the album is perfectly mixed to create a relaxing and almost nostalgic feeling in many songs. “From a Bird’s Eye View” includes features from Gunna, Lil Durk, Lil Wayne, H.E.R. and even the legendary Stevie Wonder. All of the features did a good job on this album and fit well into the songs.

Cordae explained the meaning of the album title “From a Bird’s Eye View” in an interview with Big Boy Neighborhood. “As human beings, we tend to all have, like, main character syndrome. It’s to see things from

a more zoomed-out lens.” While I appreciate what Cordae was going for, I feel like the title of the album is not reflective enough of the actual music. This is not always true, but typically, to create a masterpiece of an album everything must relate by tying together, or in some cases the opposite. However, Cordae had neither of these components, and I was expecting something more lyrically related as an entire piece instead of just individual tracks.

Still, Cordae dropped many great songs with this album. His quick flow and hard-hitting lyrics on “Parables Remix” serves as a good example for a modern-day rap banger. Additionally, “Super” is an amazing example of this. The instrumental is almost perfect, and compiled with Cordae’s unmatched flow and witty lyrics, the track does not miss. In another track that I enjoyed, “Momma’s Hood,” he mentions how he dropped out of college in order to pursue his rap career. Aside from the lack of an overall story, Cordae has combined sounds of old and new hip hop along with creative wordplay and solid rhymes to craft an impressive album. “From a Bird’s Eye View” deserves a solid 7.5/10.

THE REGISTER

The Grove

Alice Larson
staff writer

The Grove Juicery and Wellness Café is a trendy Omaha juice house that offers a unique customer experience. Located on the corner of 24th and Leavenworth, The Grove sells a variety of nutritious cold pressed juices, plant based milks, smoothies, and traditional café items. All ingredients are sourced from local, organic growers, and all products are made fresh daily.

The atmosphere inside the café is reminiscent of the west coast, laid back, friendly, and health focused, and is unmatched at other Omaha establishments. Employees usually dress comfortably and have a personality that makes patrons feel at ease. Large eastern facing windows allow for natural light to beam throughout the lightly painted shop and offer customers a view into the heart of downtown. Plants engulf the southern facing wall creating a halo of greenery around a bold, deep blue, velvet sofa where all can sit while enjoying their juice, milk, smoothie, tonic or café item.

The Grove offers an extensive menu that caters to many different tastes. Unlikely produce pairings exist in every product, all aiming to create unique refreshments for customers. Having tried a variety of juices and café items, some of my favorite drinks are Sweetart juice, Knockout Hydrating tonic and Ocean Dream smoothie. Sweetart is a sweet, refreshing, juice made with watermelon, green apple, mint, beet, basil, ginger, and lime combine to create a piquant drink. Knockout is tangy and tart, made with filtered water, lemon, lime, activated char-

coal and agave which offer an invigorating tonic. Ocean Dream, a tropical, vibrant turquoise smoothie made with pineapple, banana, coconut cream, blue majik, and plant milk, remind one of sweet summer freedoms. The Grove's commitment to recycling, the use of glass bottles and recyclable materials for every drink, and the monetary discounts for bringing back old juice glasses all lead to patron's further enjoyment of the café.

Every experience I have had at The Grove has been enjoyable due to their friendly staff. With a wide array of drink options to choose from, anytime I've had questions, the staff has been eager to help me and I've left with a new drink flavor I enjoy. Despite how much I've enjoyed going to The Grove and how close it is to Central, it's interesting that Central students don't frequent The Grove as much as other downtown cafés. I believe high schoolers' limited economic freedom is responsible for this. Most students with jobs work for minimum wage or slightly over, so shelling out \$10 per juice (the average Grove item is close to \$10) isn't a sustainable option for most students. However their prices aren't incredibly outrageous, and students who are able to afford a higher priced drink from time to time should certainly try The Grove.

An aesthetically pleasing interior, high quality ingredients, a care for the environment, friendly customer service and semi-affordable prices all make The Grove an enjoyable café to visit. A refreshing drink is available to all who step outside their comfort zone and enter the west-coast-esque world of Grove juices, plant milks, tonics, smoothies and traditional café items.



SOPHIE YOUNGS | The Register



Fú Asian Grill

Sophie Youngs
staff writer

Fú Asian Grill is the perfect restaurant close to Central for students to grab a bite to eat, study or to hang out.

A great feature for students is the fact that it is so cheap. Every rice dish is around \$6, so it's perfect if you're on a budget.

I ordered the crispy ginger tofu and the spicy crispy chicken for the main dishes. Both came with rice and veggies and were a total of \$12. I got an order of the spring rolls, which came with two, and that was only around \$3. I also got two waters which were a dollar each. Overall, my total was only around \$18.

The food was all very good. The spicy crispy chicken had a really good flavor and was very delicious. I loved the flavor of the spicy tofu as well, and the vegetables

were amazing. The spring rolls were my least favorite part. There was not much flavor, and the sauce was too sweet for my liking.

The service was good as well. The guy who took my order was very nice and helpful in deciding what to eat, and my food was ready within 10 minutes of ordering.

The best part of Fú Asian Grill is the atmosphere. The little restaurant is filled with a ton of plants and beautiful art. It is also very bright, creating a very relaxing environment.

It was also very quiet my entire time being there, so it's a good place to study if you need someplace relaxing.

Overall, I think Fú Asian Grill is a great place for students to gather because of the pricing and overall atmosphere.

Zen Coffee

Ella Novak
staff writer

Zen Coffee is one of the many coffee shops downtown within reasonable walking distance of Central. An easily accessible coffee shop can be really important for students who want to study or hang out with friends. However, I think that on a student's most likely limited budget, Zen should not be the preferred option.

The coffee itself is good, but for a small latte to cost five dollars, it is nowhere near worth it. The last time I went there I ordered a small white mocha pistachio latte with oat milk. While I know that opting oat milk is often an added charge, the grand total cost for the small drink was almost \$8. For a drink that expensive, I would expect incredible quality, but by no fault of the barista who made it, it just really didn't make that big of an impression on me. Don't get me wrong, it was a good coffee, but it did not live up to the price. I have also had their vanilla lattes. Again, for the price I just do not think they are as exceptional as they should be.

While I haven't tried a lot of their food, I have tried their blueberry scones. I really enjoyed the flavor and consistency of the scone. It was slightly sweet but not so much that it was overwhelming. It was also perfectly crumbly. Since I haven't had a lot of their food, I cannot say much about it but from the food I have seen in their

display case, it all looks really tasty and filling for either breakfast or a midday snack.

The atmosphere of the store is probably the best part. The staff are always very kind and welcoming, which makes for a delightful visit. There are also lots of unique styles of seating options that all cater to different needs. There are couches for lounging around with friends and plenty of seating options with easily accessible outlets for easy device charging. I really enjoy the atmosphere of the building but honestly, the unreasonable prices of their products cannot justify that for me.

One positive aspect of the company is their dedication to keeping their business sustainable with things like in-house composting and selling their food and drinks in compostable containers. With other coffee shops worrying more about money and efficiency, it's refreshing to see a company taking charge of these matters.

Zen is most popularly known for their more extravagant drink options like their Belgian waffle latte or their Valentine's Day themed drink, the red velvet latte. They also have a wide range of colorful drinks to choose from. But realistically, if you are going to go study with friends who may not want to spend a lot on drinks, choose one of the many other coffee shops in the nearby area. But if you're instead looking for a place to try some interesting drink trend you saw on the internet, Zen coffee is the perfect place.



REVIEWS: DOWNTOWN BITES

Manhattan Deli

Livia Ziskey
editor-in-chief

Manhattan Deli deserves the one-word description of “convenient” for a multitude of reasons. Located inside the Service Life Building on 19th and Farnam, its proximity to Central as well as the general downtown area makes it a prime choice for a quick meal.

The delicatessen does not only serve lunch, however. The breakfast menu can be ordered from until 10 a.m. While I did not get the chance to try their breakfast, I could not help but notice the extremely cheap prices, with three pancakes being just \$2.59 and an omelet sandwich ringing up at \$4.

The prices of lunch were fairly cheap as well, with most of the menu items being between \$6 and \$8. The menu itself was extremely customizable, with a variety of ways to build your own sandwich or upgrade a meal to a combo. I ordered a BLT and parmesan tomato soup to fill the half-sandwich and cup of soup combination. Adding in my medium fountain drink, my total was around \$10. Aside from sandwiches and soups, the menu featured multiple salads to order as a main course.

The parmesan tomato soup was deliciously creamy and the perfect temperature. My only critique was that all the parmesan had stuck to the bottom of the cup, so my last few bites were dominated by cheese. Parmesan overload aside, the rest of the flavors were spot on.

I have no complaints about the BLT. The bread was toasted just right, with a slight golden-brown coloration on the top. The tomatoes and lettuce tasted fresh, and the bacon was cooked well (not too crispy but not overly chewy either).

The counter-service aspect of Manhattan Deli made for a quick and convenient order experience, and my food was ready for me to retrieve in around five minutes. The main menu is colorfully hand-drawn on a chalkboard, which adds a unique quality to the ordering experience.

What stood out to me as particularly convenient during these times of COVID was the arrangement of tables throughout the deli. The restaurant is divided into multiple sections by walkways, each section having a few tables, which makes for a private dining experience. I was able to sit in a section by myself, safely distanced from other parties. The extensive wall of windows let in some appreciated natural light, which made the experience even more enjoyable.

The deli is currently open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays. While these hours do limit



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the chance for most high school students to eat here, I recommend it to all others who can find a time to stop in for lunch or breakfast. For those looking for convenience and quality food in the downtown area, Manhattan Deli is the place to go.



LUCY MASON | The Register

The Bike Union

Charlie Yale
web editor

The Bike Union located on 18th and Dodge is a do-it-all one-stop-shop for bike nerds and coffee lovers alike. Although its hours barely permit because of Central’s schedule, the Bike Union is the perfect spot to grab a coffee and meet with friends or do some homework after school.

The Bike Union, as the name suggests, offers bike purchasing and service as well as coffee and food. The shop offers a range of bike products, from biking wear and accessories to fully assembled bikes. The Bike Union primarily sells Marin bikes, also offering quality refurbished bikes as well as gently used parts.

While there, I inquired about their bike service, where they referred me to The Bike Rack, located at 14510 Eagle Run Drive, which makes the two shops a 20-minute drive apart. This would be a large inconvenience for anyone who urgently needed bike service within the area.

Overall, The Bike Union offers quality bikes, good parts and accessories, all for a reasonable price. The service detour takes away from the bike experience, but they were prepared and equipped with a solution to their presumed backlog.

Secondly, I was pleasantly surprised by the excellence of the coffee I purchased. I sampled four drinks; a shot of espresso, an iced vanilla latte, the Turtle, and the dirty chai,

the two latter drinks being a few of their specialties.

The base shot of espresso had died by the time I drank it, but the smell it originally had was undeniably wonderful. The actual shot was quite bitter and earthy, which did not help my already soured view of plain espresso. On the whole, the shot had a good nose to it, but the taste did not live up to expectations.

The iced vanilla latte was my favorite out of the four drinks I sampled. Many times, lattes with flavoring in them will be too sweet. The Bike Union found a perfect happy medium between the wonderful tones from the coffee and the sweetness of the vanilla syrup. The drink had a good consistency, was mixed well, and was also placed at a good price point, under \$5.

The Turtle is The Bike Union’s signature drink containing chocolate sauce, caramel syrup and hazelnut syrup. This drink is very sweet, which can be assumed from the three different flavorings put into it. While this drink is very sweet, it is still a quality drink. I found it too sweet to be a normal order, but for special occasions it would be enjoyable.

Finally, the dirty chai was The Bike Union’s drink of the month. Their version of a dirty chai was made with oat milk, had a shot of espresso and had extra cinnamon dusted on top of the drink. The flavor of this drink was excellent. Masala chai is a spiced drink, which some people may find hard to palate, but I thought the oat milk helped to compliment it with its ex-

tra nuttiness. My one complaint about the drink was the taste of espresso was not prevalent enough in the drink. Otherwise, their drink was superb and I would certainly order it again.

The drinks I ordered from the Bike Union were overwhelmingly good, but that is not all they had to offer. Inside the store, they offer pastries from Hardy Coffee. I tried the gluten free banana nut muffin, which I thought had amazing taste. As with most gluten free products, the muffin lacked much moisture and was a little dry and crumbly, but it ranked high compared to other gluten free muffins that I have ever had.

The environment within the shop is perfect for the type of store it is trying to be. There is a multitude of different seating options, including tables with chairs, singular chairs and couches. The interesting circular shape of the building makes it look somewhat like a clam shell from the outside, but contributes to a somewhat cozy and warm atmosphere on the inside, even with the number of windows and amount of outside light that they allow in.

In conclusion, the Bike Union is a must stop near Central. Their proximity allows it to just be a short walk away, although it is hard for students to visit on weekdays because of the hours (8 a.m. – 4 p.m.). The coffee drinks offered are excellent, the new and refurbished bike selection is extensive and the atmosphere within the store is one that any student would enjoy.

sports & leisure

BEHRENS' FINAL SEASON

After two decades at Central, Eric Behrens announces his decision to accept the AD job at Westview High.



EUAN MILNE | The O-Book

Coach Eric Behrens talks to his team about their next play of the game. This is his final season at the nest, as he will be taking on the role of athletic director at the new Westview High School.

Charlie Yale
web editor

Boys basketball coach Eric Behrens will coach his last game as an Eagle this March.

Behrens has been an incredibly successful coach for the Eagles, amassing 381 wins and 79 losses during his time at Central, winning an absurd 79.2 percent of his games. Behrens won seven Class A state titles as head coach, completing an astonishing four peat from 2009-2013. Behrens' Eagles were only the second team ever to accomplish this feat. Over his tenure, Behrens coached 15 Division I basketball recruits.

"I mean, I've been here for two decades, I have so many memories," Behrens says. "It's mostly about relationships with people. Former players, their families, the people that have been around the program all these years."

Behrens is taking on the role of athletic director at Westview High School, one of the two new high schools that Omaha Public Schools is opening for the 2022-2023 school year. Behrens says it is not often one gets the opportunity to completely build the athletic culture at a school.

"You're just building the sports culture from the ground up. You're able to build an athletic department, every coach you hire is gonna be the first girls cross-country coach, first football coach, first

track coach," he said. "Everyone you hire is going to put their stamp on their program right away and establish a culture in how they want things done and as an athletic department as a whole we get to do that as well, it's an exciting opportunity."

Behrens says when looking for coaches, he focuses on finding people who focus on the whole student and not just the athlete.

"[I want] people who are enthusiastic, people who are student-centered, they want to treat their student athletes the right way, but they also have a competitive spirit where they want to try and build successful programs that win games," he mentions.

Before the 2014 season, Behrens left Central to coach at the college level at Peru State. He returned to Central for the 2017 season after three years.

The Eagles are currently ranked fourth in the state with a 13-3 record heading into the final stretch of the season.

"We're just taking it one game, one weekend at a time and trying to just get better in practice," he says.

After over a decade at Central, Behrens explains that what mattered most to him were the people surrounding the program.

"It's really not as much winning and losing games as it is about building relationships with people."

Bowling team demonstrates strength during first year

Chloe Johnson
staff writer

Central welcomed their first varsity bowling team this year. While most started the season unsure of what to expect, they are now one of the top bowling programs in the city. The boys' team is now second only to Burke in the OPS roster. They even took down athletic powerhouse, Gretna in their first meet.

"We are unexpectedly winning lots of duels, for a first year, this is a strong progression," senior Ben Nodes said.

Most who joined had never thought of bowling as more than a fun excuse to go out with friends. Almost everyone on the team doesn't even own their own shoes or balls. Some, such as Nodes were prompted by baseball and now bowling coach, Gerald Kreber. "To be able to show off to my friends at West-lanes," is the long-term bowling goal offered by Nodes.

The coaches quickly realized that the team had the possibility to be much more impressive than they had anticipated.

"Once they saw the potential in us, the coaches started learning the game themselves" senior and star bowler, Michael Roum said.

From this realization on, the team has only snowballed their success. This growth did not happen overnight. The team practices twice a week for two hours at a time and has at least one meet a week. They stretch with finger mobility and arm circles.

"Occasional wrist pain is a part of the sport's physical demands," Nodes said.

Some even end up with wrist braces while they are adjusting to the new movements. He also described bowling's mental challenges noting, "There is no defense in bowling. You can't control how your opponent is doing, you can only control yourself."

Throughout this journey the bowling team has maintained a laid-back attitude while building up their resume. And perhaps this is the reason the team has earned their 5-1 record. "I didn't think we would make it this far 5 and 1 is pretty big," Roum said.

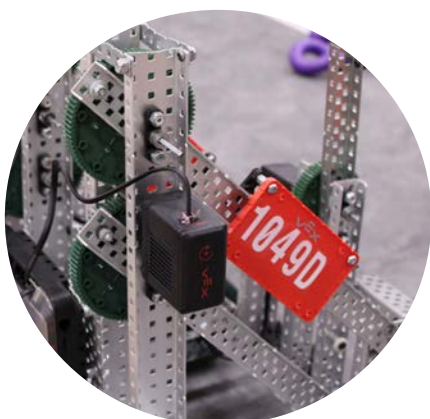
"We don't take it as seriously as other teams who show up with their own balls and shoes, but we are actually really good compared to them," freshman bowler, Evalina Sain said. "We just show up and let go and that really helps because we are not as stressed out."



Photo Courtesy of CENTRAL HIGH BOWLING TEAM
Members of the Boys Bowling Team pose during one of their matches. Though this was the first year that bowling was offered as a sport, it was a resounding hit. (From left to right: Sheldon Meyer, Ben Nodes, Peter Sullivan, Michael Roam and Parker Lakin.)

Nodes says the team goal for this year is to win districts. As Metros looms and the time to achieve this goal dwindles, the team invites spectators to cheer them on during their final meets at West Lanes. The students on the team are here for fun, and maybe a varsity letter.

"Everybody is friends, we don't have an issue with anybody," Roum said.



ROBOTICS on page 17



BASKETBALL on page 18



TENNIS on page 19

Varsity basketball player plans to stay involved after high school



Photo Courtesy of JOHN RUSSELL

Jones high fives teammates during her introduction. She has been playing basketball since she was 3-years-old. The game has always been a passion for her.

Elena Correa
section editor

Inia Jones: every Central basketball fan knows her name, and so do colleges. Jones is a player that makes waves in an environment dominated by upperclassmen. Jones is one of a few sophomores on a mostly senior varsity girls basketball team. It's no surprise either because her stats sky rocket above national averages.

Playing with upperclassmen doesn't bother Jones. "It helps me get better everyday. They push me to become a better me, on and off the court."

Jones stands out because of her determination and attitude. "[I know] when it's time to handle business. I think I bring positivity to our team, I try to keep everybody happy and smiling at all times."

Her love for basketball started at a very young age. "My older brother used to play basketball, and my dad was his coach. When I was about three, I just asked if I could go to practice one day and shoot around," Jones said. "After seeing the atmosphere and the energy in that gym, I knew it was something I was interested in. In fifth grade, I played my first summer of AAU ball

with the boys, and I've been in love with it ever since."

For Jones, basketball means everything. "I've lost family members who have supported me like no other, and for them I have no choice but to keep going."

Development is what Jones says would describe her season thus far. "We just keep growing, and getting better."

Jones plans on playing basketball in college. "I currently have offers from UNO, Indiana State and University of Louisiana-Monroe."

She is still uncommitted and completely open to offers. Ideally, her dream school is Louisiana State University.

Jones has bright plans for the future. Her goal for this year is "going to Kansas City and showing them what Omaha, Nebraska is really about."

A college basketball career wouldn't be the end of her path, however. She plans to stay involved in the sport in whatever way she can as an adult.

"After graduating high school first and going to college, I definitely want to stay in the basketball community. WNBA, overseas, college coach, trainer, just [anything to] keep me around basketball."

Sophomore finds new community in powerlifting

Izzy Walocha
staff writer

Central hosted a powerlifting meet on Jan. 22, breaking five records and coming in first place for both girls and boys.

Central powerlifting is a sport beloved by many and brings forth a variety of people to compete. One of the members of this sport is powerlifter and soccer player Ann Carlson. Carlson began powerlifting her freshman year, but because of Covid, the sport did not have as large of a team. She originally did not express as much interest in the sport.

"I started powerlifting because two of my best friends were and I wanted to get stronger for soccer season. It also allowed for me to lift at Central which wasn't an option otherwise because of Covid," Carlson said.

Carlson looked at the sport as training for her soccer season but soon found out that she really enjoyed it. She soon made many friends through this sport and plans to continue it throughout her high school experience. Carlson was a competitor at Central's first host of the season, and she believes this to be one of the most successful meets of the season. The school

broke five records in total. She states that fellow powerlifter Ke'Ijha Hadley squatting 500 pounds was the most memorable moment of the tournament.

"The best moments of the meet were watching Ke'Ijha squat 500 pounds. This was really cool because the entire gym was gathered around her cheering for her to break the state record," Carlson said.

But Carlson also states that there is love on the team for everyone.

"Everyone is extremely supportive of each other. People don't care about where you start, only where you finish. No matter how heavy or light your weight is people are still cheering you on, which is honestly the best part," said Carlson.

Powerlifting is also an example of how other schools support each other. One of her favorite moments of the meet happened to be watching a lifter for Omaha North.

"Another cool moment was when Jordan from Omaha North made his squat. He has Down syndrome and everyone was gathered around for him cheering him on" commented Carlson.

Powerlifting has given Carlson many benefits alongside

a great team that has brought her many friends and created a family. She enjoys the mental clarity that powerlifting brings her. She also likes how strong it makes her, both physically and mentally. Carlson considers powerlifting an activity that clears her head and makes her a happier person. Powerlifting also gives her confidence and drive.

"Powerlifting helped me become a more competitive person and believe in myself before," Carlson said. "Before I joined the team, I was kind of quiet and didn't think I would ever be able to lift what I do now. Now when I look at a heavy weight, I start to believe in myself and know I can do it rather than shutting my brain out."

Carlson plans on continuing powerlifting. She is ready for a great finish to the season and excited for future seasons.

"I do plan on continuing powerlifting throughout high school. It helps me get a lot stronger for soccer and allows me to meet more people," Carlson said. "The coaches are amazing and supportive, and they create a fun environment that makes it feel like a family."

Central hosts first ever robotics competition

Jane McGill
staff writer

Central hosted its first ever robotics tournament Saturday, Jan. 29, inviting robotics teams from schools all over the Omaha metropolitan area to compete.

"It ended up going really well," robotics teacher Lisa Wheeler said. "This is the first time we've ever had one at Central. But everything ended up going very smoothly from setup to takedown. We had some wonderful JROTC kids that came and helped. We had to set four [Robotics] fields up separately, not to mention all the other technology and computers that go into it. I couldn't have asked for it to go any better." Reflecting on the performance of the Central Robotics teams at the tournament, Wheeler stated, "All of our teams did really well. One of teams won the Judge's Award. The other teams also did really well. They actually came in second place, only because their robot tipped over. They could've taken first."

Wheeler has been impressed with her teams this year. "They're a great group. They always help each other out at competitions, I think they work really well together. This year I'm really proud because, for the first time ever, we have three teams that I would say have an 85 percent chance of going to state. They really want to do well. They're up here working whenever they have a spare moment. I have one kid that gives up his lunch every day to come up and work."

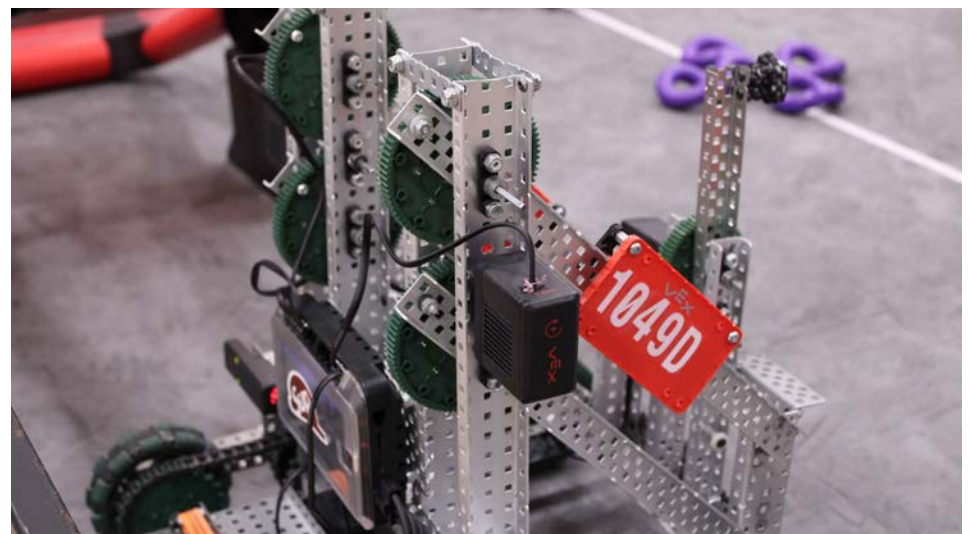
The robotics students themselves professed the benefits of the sport to those

students who participate. Student Ian Wise discussed how Robotics helps participants broaden their horizons, saying, "I really feel it's beneficial because it helps open our minds to new ideas and new things that we can do, it helps to inspire us. Some things don't always work as planned, but you can still keep going."

Sophomore Kendall Duncan, who has been involved in Robotics since her eighth-grade year, said, "I really like the people. It's a very nice community. I've made a lot of friends, not just at Central, but at other schools too. I think it's the main aspect of Robotics that everyone really stays for."

Simultaneously, Duncan emphasizes how advantageous the activity can be for students' future career prospects. "It teaches you things like engineering and code, which are going to be very big things in the future. If you look at how our technology is growing, those concepts are going to be the big money earners in the future. Knowing how to do those, even if it's minimal, will guarantee you jobs down the line. And being in this class will teach you the basics."

Students are encouraged to sign up for robotics. "I would say to give it a year and try it out. Start with Robotics 1-2 so you can see what all goes into it," Wheeler said. "You have to have the basics down before you can hop on a team. Robotics 1-2 teaches all the teamwork, it teaches the building part, it teaches the coding part of it, at the end you get to design your own robot. At the end of that class, if you still like it, then you are set to go for Robotics."



CLAIRE LINNELL | The O-Book

Students and advisors gather around as the robots compete. Robotics can aid students in their future careers.

Boys basketball hopeful for remainder of season

Charlie Yale
web editor

Approaching the final stretch of the season, Central Boys Basketball holds onto a 15-4 record. The Eagles, after starting 4-0, dropped their first game to the Papillion-LaVista South Titans, a bout that has almost gained rivalry status over the last two years.

"We know we can do better, and I think it's always a work in progress. You play the game, you analyze what you did right and what you did wrong, and you go back and try to fix the things you did wrong. Hopefully, you do them right the next time," Coach Eric Behrens said.

The Eagles went on to face the Titans once more, this time triumphing over them. The Eagle's next loss was against the Bellevue West Thunderbirds, the third ranked team in the state.

"Bellevue West, we play the last Friday of the season. There are just some things we saw on film that we know we can improve upon," Behrens said.

The next two losses from the Eagles came from Millard North and Gretna, both games being within six points at the final buzzer. The Eagles face off against five more teams this season, including the Westside Warriors, the first ranked team in the state.

Throughout the season, there have been many stand-out players for the Eagles, including senior combo guard Jayden Dawson. Dawson, committed to Loyola-Chicago, averages 17.1 points per game, 5.2 rebounds per game, 3.3 assists per game and 2.2 steals per game.

"We knew coming in he'd be our scorer, but I think his playmaking has really taken off. We're putting the ball in his hands more as our

point guard, and you look at the point production for this weekend. A big factor is his ability to distribute," Behrens says.

PJ Davis, senior guard, has stepped into a larger role this season compared to last year. Davis, who averages 17.2 points per game, along with 3.6 rebounds per game and 1.2 assists per game, recently committed to Central Community College.

"We knew PJ could shoot and score. He probably didn't shoot quite the percentages in the first 4, 5 games that we hoped, but I think he's kinda found his shooting touch a little. He's also attacking the basket. He is getting to the rim and making his free throws," Behrens explains. "His scoring has obviously been a big boost for us."

Keah Paljor (KP), 6'7" senior, has been a large part of the Eagles' ability to score this year.

"KP is really skilled. He does shoot the ball well. That's no surprise. We hope that he can continue to find the ability to knock down perimeter shots. Obviously, at his height, getting around the basket and contributing in the paint as well."

Behrens highlights the Eagles' improvement from the first half of the season.

"We came in with Jayden Dawson and PJ Davis as experienced players, but not much beyond that. I think we've got some varsity games under some guys belts and we've got some experience. You start to see guys getting more comfortable out there, and I think it shows in improved play," Behrens explains. "I definitely think we've gotten better from game one to where we are today, and I hope that trend continues."



EUAN MILNE | The O-Book

Top; Awit Mamer watches as the refs make a call on a play. Bottom Left; Raheem Briggs shoots a free throw. Bottom Right; Jayden Dawson goes in for a lay up. This season has been a good one for the team, but with it being Coach Behrens' last season, the team wishes for a strong finish.



Photos Courtesy of NATALIA SHRADAR

Shradar dribbles down the field to prep for a pass to a teammate. She feels grateful for all of her fellow players for making her time in soccer so enjoyable.

Senior soccer player expresses future plans

Livia Ziskey
editor-in-chief

Natalia Shradar is preparing to play soccer at the college level next year. The senior varsity athlete signed with Hamline University, a private college in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Hamline competes as an NCAA Division III school, and the women's soccer team is a member of the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Shradar has been playing soccer consistently since the age of four, starting with a recreational league within the Omaha Futbol Club. She came to know and appreciate the sport on her own.

"I was introduced to soccer by myself. It's the only sport I've ever played. I've done dance and figure skating, so it's been the only actual sport I've played," Shradar said.

While she cannot pinpoint the exact moment she began loving the game of soccer, Shradar remembers constantly being surrounded by it as she grew up.

"I had a lot of friends on my rec team, so that was really nice. Toward club soccer, my mom coached me, so I always played...I just learned to really like it because I was surrounded by it so much," Shradar said.

She is grateful to the girls on her current club team for continuing to make soccer an enjoyable experience and for the effort they continue to put in.

"I love every single one of those girls on my club team. They're super supportive and super fun and always set each other up for success. They make me excited to go to practice," Shradar said.

Before Shradar found Hamline, she was "super set" on going to college and playing soccer in Florida. She looked into multiple Florida colleges during her junior year, but COVID made it difficult to keep up the contact.

"It was super hard to continuously go back and forth between Florida and Omaha. All of those coaches wanted to see me play at least three times before they gave me an offer, so that was a big commitment and a lot of time away from my own team," Shradar said.

One of her assistant coaches told her to look closer to home, as she might be surprised with the schools she could find.

"I followed her advice, and I found Hamline. I went up for a visit, and I really loved how they treated their athletes. They're super well taken care of," Shradar said.

She noted that the campus is surrounded by professional sports teams, which will set her up for her future career.

"It will set me up for my future, because I want to be a sports broadcaster. The athletic director gave me some really good connections so that I can possibly get an internship with one of the pro sports teams," Shradar said.

As a member of the varsity soccer team since her freshman year, Shradar is looking forward to her final season as an eagle. She has high hopes for this year's team.

"Our assistant coach, Jen, really holds us accountable and helps the team get better all the time," Shradar said. "It's the year to go to state."

She wants to be able to help the younger players become more comfortable around everyone and be a supportive teammate on and off the field.

"We have a really great group of girls. They're all positive and we never have any drama between us," Shradar said. "I think I communicate well, and I can help players on the field. I'm excited to take on that leadership aspect of the game and be a role model for younger girls."



Photo Courtesy of SHRUTTI GARAPATI

Garapati poses in front of the tennis net with several of her fellow teammates. While she loves the sport, and excels at it, she is not currently planning on continuing her tennis career in college.

Sophomore discusses upcoming tennis season

Alice Larson
staff writer

Tennis is a relatively ignored sport among the Central student body. Often classified as a “country club” sport, many students hesitate to tryout. Many students have never picked up a racket and a lack of student body interest leads to a sparse number of spectators at matches. Despite little acclaim for our tennis program, Central usually ranks as one of the top OPS tennis teams and makes a worthy adversary for private and non-OPS schools. Perhaps the girls’ team in particular will gain more recognition in the coming seasons due to the fact that powerhouse Shrutti Garapati is not a player anyone can ignore. The athlete is only in her sophomore season, and will already be starting the upcoming spring season playing #1 singles and #1 doubles for Central’s varsity team.

Garapati has had lengthy experiences in gymnastics and soccer but will be celebrating her decade long commitment to the tennis court this year. While her tennis career began with an intermittent dedication to the sport once or twice a month, she grew to appreciate the freedoms that came with playing. “I liked that with practices and everything it was only as often as I wanted,” Garapati said.

She also appreciates the autonomy that accompanies life on the court. “What I love and hate about tennis at the same time, is everything is on you, I like relying on myself,” she said. “With soccer and just the coaching you didn’t always have a lot of control over stuff, and what I like about tennis is how much I have control over stuff.”

However, a life of self-sufficiency can be at times isolating in a sport that is heavily a mental game between you and your opponent. Garapati noted the group aspect of Central tennis is what she is most looking forward to in the coming season. “I just like all the people—I just like everyone, practices are really fun— and again tennis is an individual sport, before high school I didn’t have a team or anything so it’s really nice to have a team,” Garapati said.

Garapati, who competed only second to recent graduate Greta Bullerdick last season, is a bit nervous for her debut as a top player this season. “Playing number one is a lot,” she said.

Given that tennis is not as common a game as typical Midwestern pastimes such as football, the tight knit nature of the tennis community can at times also be stressful. “Tennis isn’t a very big community, so when I’m playing people from other schools, I know a lot of them and there’s an obvious pressure in that,” Garapati said.

Despite Garapati’s talent, her current tennis plans are to stop after high school. “I’m probably still going to play just for fun, but I don’t want to play competitively in college,” she said. “I think I could probably get into a better school based on academics, and I’m just more focused on my future plans in terms of a career—like perusing law or engineering”. Whatever Garapati conquers next, her time on the court will certainly not be forgotten anytime soon.

Broadcast crew brings events to wider audiences

Daniel Graham
staff writer

When Dr. Keith Bigsby was in his final year as principal, he wanted to improve the fan experience in the gym lobby at Eagle basketball games. Within less than a year, this dream led to the creation of Central’s first broadcast crew.

Bigsby’s original goal was to boost sales at the concessions stand in the gym lobby by adding a debit and credit card payment system and televisions. The card reader—the first of its kind in the district—was a response to the fact that the student body was beginning to carry debit or credit cards more often than they would carry cash. The televisions were a response to the fact that fans were less likely to go get concessions during the game, for fear of missing part of the action.

“That was the premise of our first attempt to go do some live casting,” Bigsby said. “We were really doing it in-house, into the gym lobby, so we could sell people stuff.”

From there, Bigsby went to the Central High Foundation and asked for money to pay for a good camera and a contract with Striv.TV, an online streaming service that helps high schools broadcast their games. This made Central the first school in the city to sign up with Striv, which is now used at about 158 schools in the state.

Bigsby started with basketball. He convinced two students to join the broadcast crew, and they went to work with a single camera, a computer, and a microphone, instead of the headsets they have now.

“We felt like we were pretty big time, until we got down to state, and we saw Kearney,” Bigsby said. “They had a three-camera set up, they were running sound boards, and they were watching the video on screens. At that point, I said, ‘My goodness. We’re ahead of the curve in Omaha, but we’re behind the curve in the state of Nebraska.’”

Some of the small towns across the state had students that took broadcasting as a class, not just an extracurricular activity. This put those schools far ahead of Central at the time. The people who changed this for Central’s broadcast were the Register editor at the time, Alec Rome, and Central parent and media specialist Sean Weide. They both introduced new ideas about how the broadcast should be run.

“The one thing about me is I’m not going to tell anyone is ‘no,’” Bigsby said. “If you’ve got a good idea, let’s go play.”

Before long, the broadcast had grown to cover not just basketball, but also football, wrestling, and soccer. It has even branched out from sporting events to cover other school events, including the Hall of Fame induction ceremony, senior recognition night, and theater productions. The Foundation has continued to buy equipment for the broadcast crew, as well as pay a small stipend to the students who are a part of the crew.

Now, the broadcast attracts around 500-1,000 viewers for an average game, and up to 5,000 for a highly anticipated game. The gym still fills up for each game, which silenced the main argument against live casting, which was that it would hurt ticket sales.

“What we discovered was that you’ve got people from Kansas City, Chicago, and Los Angeles, all over the country watching this stuff,” Bigsby said. “And the interesting thing is



Photo Courtesy of JOE CRAIG

Sophomore Isabel Walocha, senior Livia Ziskey and junior Shyla Youngs all help broadcast the girls and boys basketball games. The broadcast attracts around 500-1,000 viewers per game.

that a lot of those are alumni, but a lot of them are coaches. That’s a compliment to our crew, that we make a good enough product that they’ll watch it.”

Last year, with no fans allowed in the gym, viewership grew all the way up to fifteen hundred per game, peaking near five thousand when Central faced Millard North. This brought some opposing fans to the broadcast and with them, some discontent.

“What people don’t understand about us, especially if you’re the opposing squad, is that I’m not for your team,” Bigsby said. “We’ll be nice, but I’m not going to give you the love that I’m going to give the Eagles. That was one of the biggest complaints, that we’re not neutral. Did you not see that this is the Eagle broadcast network?”

Bigsby also said that this has to do, on some level, with telling the truth about the opposing team. “We’re not going to sit there and say, just because you’re Millard North and you’ve got some really good players, that we’re afraid of you,” he said. “If they’re not playing well, I’m going to let you know. There’s an honest dialogue that’s going on, and I think that’s important.”

Looking forward, Bigsby wants to expand to cover more sports, including underclass games and cross country meets. He’s talked about covering almost anything that goes on at Central, but there are barriers that the broadcast crew will have to overcome before they can do that.

“There’s a lot of things that go on in this school that you just can’t get to, like the math contest or the acapella choir performances,” Bigsby said. “There’s just so much that goes on, and the real question is how do we capture that, and that comes back to the fact that I have to have kids and I have to have equipment in order to do it.”

In the long-term, Bigsby believes that the new pathways curriculum will allow the broadcast program to continue to grow at Central, so long as he can get teachers and students interested in participating and willing to put in the work.

“If we get the right classes established in the pathway,” Bigsby said, “there’s nothing stopping students from learning how to do the camera, learning how to do the production, and learning how to do the directing, and then doing the social media element, too, giving kids the opportunity to put together a good product.”

NOTHING BUT NET

EUAN MILNE, SOPHIE CULLUM, HOLDEN FERSHEE | THE O-BOOK

Basketball is in full swing at the nest. Though the regular season is nearly finished, the road to state for both the boys and girls continues.

