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Administration aims to limit vape usage at school

Steven Dickerson
staff writer

Central administrators have made cracking down on vaping a high priority for the 2023-2024 school year. For the first time, students were directly informed of the consequences of vaping at the beginning of the school year expectations assemblies in mid-August. Eagle Time teachers also gave a presentation on vaping in August.

Vapes, electronic devices used to inhale and exhale nicotine, have risen in popularity over the past few years. The National Institute of Health reports that more than one in four high school students used vaping devices daily in 2022, a rise from 2020 and 2021, which saw a sharp dip in vape usage as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The rise in popularity of vapes also includes THC vapes, devices that are used to inhale and exhale tetrahydrocannabinol, the main psychoactive substance found in the drug marijuana.

The increase in vape usage has made Central's administration focus more on students caught in possession of the devices. "Over the last couple of years, vaping and THC vapes have become more common at Central High School, unfortunately, like the rest of the metro and country," Dean of Students Sara Evans said.

Administrators are increasing awareness of vaping this year to improve the health of students and to address community concerns about vaping in schools, Evans said. They came up with the strategy of "bathroom camping" to help stop vaping in school. Students may see more administrators outside the bathrooms or in them at passing periods and periodically throughout the day.

Administrators started giving detentions to students caught vaping and calling their parents. The consequences have been met with positive reactions from parents, according to Evans. Building trust between the school and students' families is important to curbing vaping at Central, Evans said. "Parents should feel like they are sending their kids into a safe, healthy environment," she said. a

Evans added that students being more aware of consequences is helpful to curb vaping in schools. The Omaha Public Schools Student Code of Conduct classifies possession of a vape containing tobacco as a Level 2 violation, while

Administrators are increasing awareness of vaping this year to improve the health of students and to address community concerns about vaping in schools, Evans said. They came up with the strategy of "bathroom camping" to help stop vaping in school. Students may see more administrators outside the bathrooms or in them at passing periods and periodically throughout the day.

Photo courtesy of the NIH/CDC



possessing a vape containing THC or other illegal substances is a Level 3 violation. Level 2 and 3 violations, specifically when related to vaping devices, carry penalties of a phone call home, community counseling to deal with substance abuse, and the potential for exclusion from school and events. Multiple offenses could potentially result in suspension and expulsion.

In addition to the school consequences, students will have their vapes turned over to the police. Central School Resource Officer David Preston said that all vapes confiscated by administrators are given to the Omaha Police Department for narcotics testing. If a vape is confiscated and found to have THC, the county attorney could bring charges against that student for being in the possession of an illegal substance.

Evans and Preston stressed that

vapes of any variation are dangerous, illegal and should not be in school. "Any vape is illegal for students to possess and, therefore, they should have none," Evans said.

"Unfortunately, this is a hard lesson students must learn," Evans said. "Every person must take accountability for their actions and reactions to situations." She reminds students that they need to make decisions that are the best for them now and in the future.

Evans and the other administrators at Central believe they are making progress in combating vaping. "We are saving kids one puff at a time... but there is more work to be done for sure," Evans said. As the school year continues, students can expect administrators to continue enacting policies and strategies like "bathroom camping" to curb vape usage.

Staffing problem at Central continues, lowest number of teachers at start of school year in decades

Haylon Sipe
staff writer

Central High School has 149 classroom teachers in the 2023-24 school year, the lowest number of teaching staff at the school in 20 years.

The number of teachers at the school has been declining since 2020, falling sharply when 39 teachers left at the end of the 2021-22 school year. Twelve additional teachers left the school at the end of the 2022-23 school year, but only nine new teachers started at Central in the current school year.

Central has 16 unfilled staff positions at the time of publication, more than any other high school in Omaha Public Schools.

OPS Human Resources defines an "unfilled position" as any time there is less than one teacher for every 28 students enrolled in classes offered by an academic department at a high school. Teaching positions that have been eliminated because the district was unable to hire a qualified teacher, like Central's Chinese and Latin teaching positions, are not counted towards the number of unfilled positions.

The math department has five unfilled classroom teaching positions, more than any other department at the school.

Math Department Head Brent Larson said

that the unfilled positions in the department make every math teacher's job more difficult. "Teachers always want to do their best, and when you have more classes to teach, and larger classes to teach, it makes that harder," Larson said.

While most teachers are given two periods to plan for their classes, many Central math teachers have agreed to give up one or both of their planning periods to ensure that math classes are covered.

Central's International Baccalaureate Programme Coordinator Paul Nielson and Science Teacher Joshua Bullock have also agreed to teach math classes this year.

Bullock was approached during the month of July about teaching Algebra 1-2 classes when it became clear that the math department would not have enough math teachers to cover all the classes. He does not have an endorsement in mathematics but feels that he understands the material because algebra is frequently used in physics, which he normally teaches.

Nielson taught algebra for 10 years and helped write the curriculum for Central's algebra classes. Nielson currently teaches one Honors Algebra 3-4

TEACHERS on page 3

Former student indicted alongside Trump

Charlie Yale
co-editor-in-chief

Trevian Kutti, who attended Central during the 1987-1988 school year, was one of 18 co-defendants indicted by a Fulton County grand jury for allegedly conspiring with former President Donald Trump to overturn the results of the 2020 election in Georgia.

The indictment, which accuses Kutti of three separate charges, alleges that Rudy Giuliani, one of Trump's personal lawyers, made false claims about an election worker in Georgia. He said that the election worker, Ruby Freeman, and her daughter, Wandrea "Shaye" Moss, were "quite obviously surreptitiously passing around USB ports as if they're vials of heroin or cocaine," which were to be

used to "infiltrate the crooked Dominion voting machines."

Kutti allegedly met Freeman at the Cook County Police Station in an attempt to compel her to spread misinformation about her actions on election night. Kutti told Freeman that she was sent by a "high-profile individual" to warn Freeman that she was in unspecified danger "due to the election" and had just 48 hours to "get ahead of the issue" before people were going to show up at her home.

KUTTI on page 4

Composting at Central

Becca Rock
staff writer

Composting has been implemented in the lunchrooms at Central High School with the help of Junior Evalina Sain and alumna Chloë Johnson, who argued the program was needed to address Central's contributions to the climate crisis.

This program was established through a contract between Omaha Public Schools and local waste management company Hillside Solutions. Through the firm, Central students sort their waste by throwing non-compostable items in the trash can and compostable items in green bins marked by a sign.

Omaha South High School began composting in March 2023 after advocacy from Mia Perales, a former senior at South. She worked with the South administration and

OPS to implement composting at the high school, which is the largest in Nebraska. Perales discussed her experiences implementing composting at Students for Sustainability, a student-run climate advocacy organization. Perales's involvement in Students for Sustainability, a group that both Sain and Johnson are a part of, inspired them to take on their own journey of implementing composting at Central, with the same process of reaching out to the administration and OPS.

The process consisted of five months of advocacy beginning in early March. The idea of composting was communicated between the school administration, district administration and Hillside

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News

How a Central Alumnus helped break a cold case p. 5

In 1958, a Central student murdered his parents. Sixty years later, alumni Henry Cordes helped solve the case.

Opinion

Dress code p. 8

How the controversy surrounding Central's dress code exposes a generational divide between students and teachers.

Arts & Culture

'Bottoms' tops charts p. 12

The movie will be familiar to lovers of teen comedies but offer a refreshing twist of the genre's common tropes.

Sports

Football Transfers p. 18

Why twelve students transferred from Benson to join Central's football team.

Experienced OPS administrator Central's new assistant principal

Grace Sunseri

staff writer

Amy Ellis still finds it hard to find her way around the labyrinth of Central High School. The numbered sides are, like all newcomers, something she had to figure out in order to traverse the halls. Ellis succeeds Danielle Brandt as Assistant Principal, a position Brandt held for three years before leaving to become the principal of Lewis and Clark Middle School.

Ellis's love for teaching began with her siblings. As the oldest of six, teaching came naturally to her. "Not only the natural leadership piece but the love of learning and the love of teaching," Ellis said. She grew up a Nebraska native in the Field Club area of Omaha and attended the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, where she received her bachelor's degree in family consumer science.

As the new assistant principal and 12-month data administrator, she is in charge of attendance, grading, scheduling, teacher support and student support. A big, short-term goal is to help improve attendance. "I am just looking at processes, like how can we tighten up some processes ... like attendance; let's make sure kids are getting to class. She is anxious about parent-teacher conferences, and she wants to see how many parents come. Ellis said that Central's administration is trying to figure out how the school can be more inviting and how Central can increase parental involvement in the school.

Principal Dionne Kirksey sent out an email to all parents and students informing them of the attendance policies. "We wanted to make sure they understood the expectations of when they need to be here," Ellis said. She understands not everyone is in control of how they get to school and explained she is willing to help with these special situations.

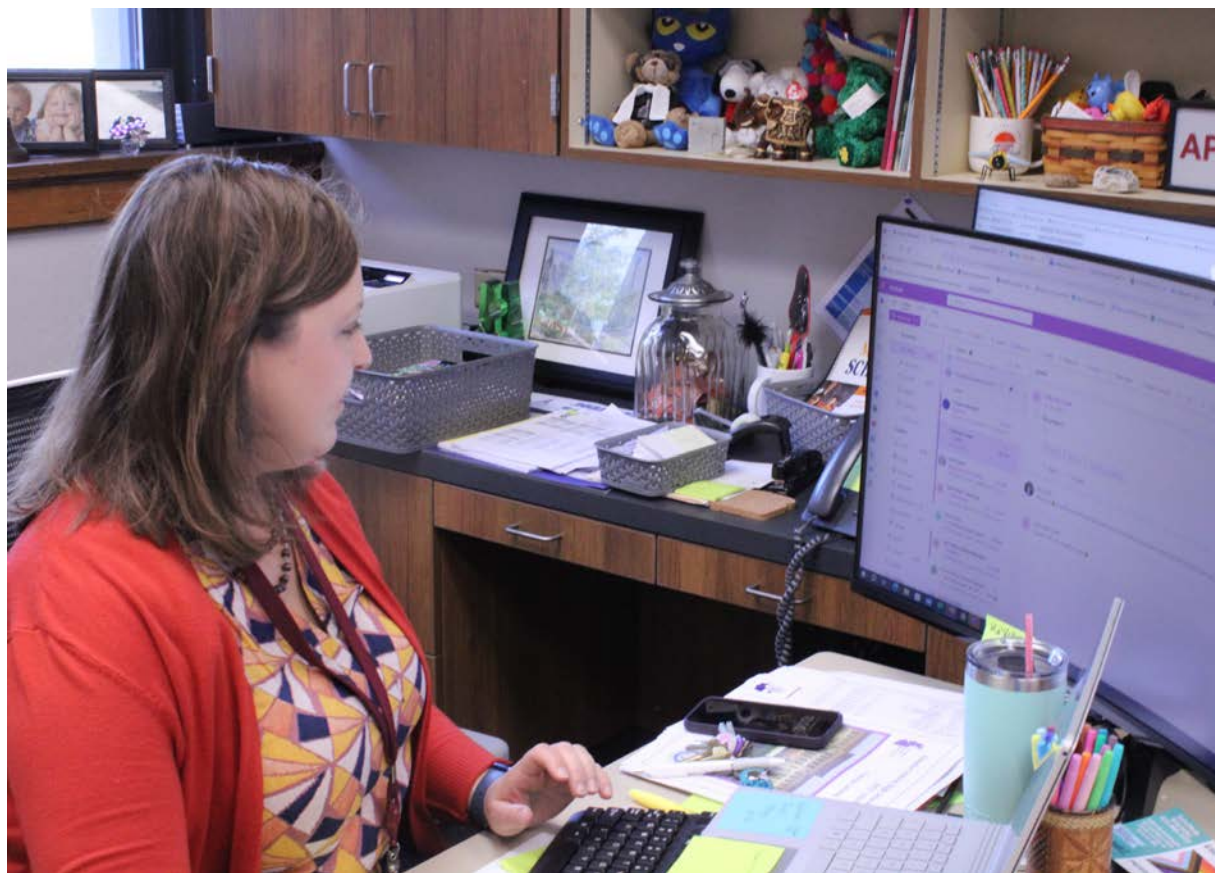
Ellis wants to make sure Central's academic programs are benefiting students, including the school's academies and pathways. "Looking at our pathways ... is that something that is working for our community is working for our kids?" If Central needs to fix an internal issue or offer an alternative class to benefit students, Ellis wants to make sure those concerns are heard by district administration.

She began her career 28 years ago at Burke High School, teaching family and consumer sciences while completing her master's degree in educational administration. In 1998, she applied for a teaching job at The American School in England, a boarding school in London, and was offered the position, which she accepted. She worked with 15 boarding students, taught technology and ran a community service organization.

"I got to see a different system, got to meet kids from all over the world, teachers from all over the world," she said.

She then landed back in OPS in 2001 as a school support liaison at the Teacher Administration Center, using her master's for the first time. Ellis explained she "helped families connect with their schools, those families that had some high needs." She became the athletic director at Bryan Middle in 2004 before transitioning into the role of data administrator in 2009.

After nine years at Bryan, she helped to open Davis Middle School in



Amy Ellis is the new data administrator for Central High School.

CRIS BATAILLON | The Register

2013 as a data administrator. "There was an opportunity when Davis opened that I wanted to open a new school and build some new culture and community," she said.

After a 10-year stint there, she decided it was time to come back to high school.

Ellis explained she enjoyed middle school because it is the formative years of a person's life, where students are still trying to figure out who they are. "I wanted to see the end ... like what is going on with high school students now [and] what did middle school do for them," she said.

She particularly enjoys working with the ninth graders and seeing their transition into high school. "I love the freshman seminar piece and the teaming pieces ... the transitioning is the hardest part."

Ellis enjoys watching students participate in extra-curriculars. "In middle school, you don't have the band playing [the events], so I loved going to the football game."

She enjoys the atmosphere of the sporting events, but said she is just as excited to see Central students participate in the performing arts. "All the fun stuff the kids put so much of their pride and joy into," Ellis said. "I love seeing kids shine."

She is a wife and mother of three kids: a junior in college at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, and a senior and freshman in high school, who are enrolled in a Catholic high school. She also enjoys sports, anything Husker, and cooking. "When I have a stressful day, I go home and cook," she said, laughing, "and my family loves those days."

Ellis feels strongly about the importance of students voicing their needs to teachers and administrators.

"When [you] feel like they need something, rather than avoid it, advocate for yourself."

Freshman Jump Start draws over 200 students

Ethan Hughes

staff writer

Freshman Jump Start had a reboot at Central this summer, and over 200 people attended.

Freshman Jump Start is a program built on the idea of easing the transition between middle and high school. For more than a few years, Jump Start was held at the OPS middle schools and was at Lewis and Clark in 2022, according to Benjamin Boeckman, a social studies teacher and director of the program last year.

The program made its return to Central after being canceled due to COVID-19 and held in middle schools for a few years due to ongoing construction at Central. Despite being a generally small program, this year, over 200 students showed up – around a third of the entire freshman body.

Matthew Hamill, a science teacher and director for the project, said in an interview with The Register that information about Jump Start was sent out on time and that there were some issues with consistent updates, but "...other than that, we did a good job of promoting it and getting that information."

While attending, students did activities to build school pride like learning the fight song, learning the layout of the building, and setting light academic goals – although it had "very little academic focus," Hamill said.

Jump Start is about the students getting to know one

another and meeting new people, Hamill said. "For us, it's entirely about, almost entirely about, building community and helping this incoming freshman class feel more comfortable," he said. "And hopefully it's not just, 'Oh, I went to middle school with that person.' They start to find some people that they have some common shared interests with."

Virginia Arce Garcia and Chloe Schwartz – two freshmen who participated in the program – said that Jump Start helped with their transition to high school.

"I've got friends from it – well, not friends, but I'm familiar with people from it," Garcia said.

"Yeah, it made me much more comfortable with the school," Schwartz said.

Hamill also credits Molly Madison, Martha Omar and Michelle Sueck – other Central teachers and major contributors to the program – for the success of this year's Jump Start.



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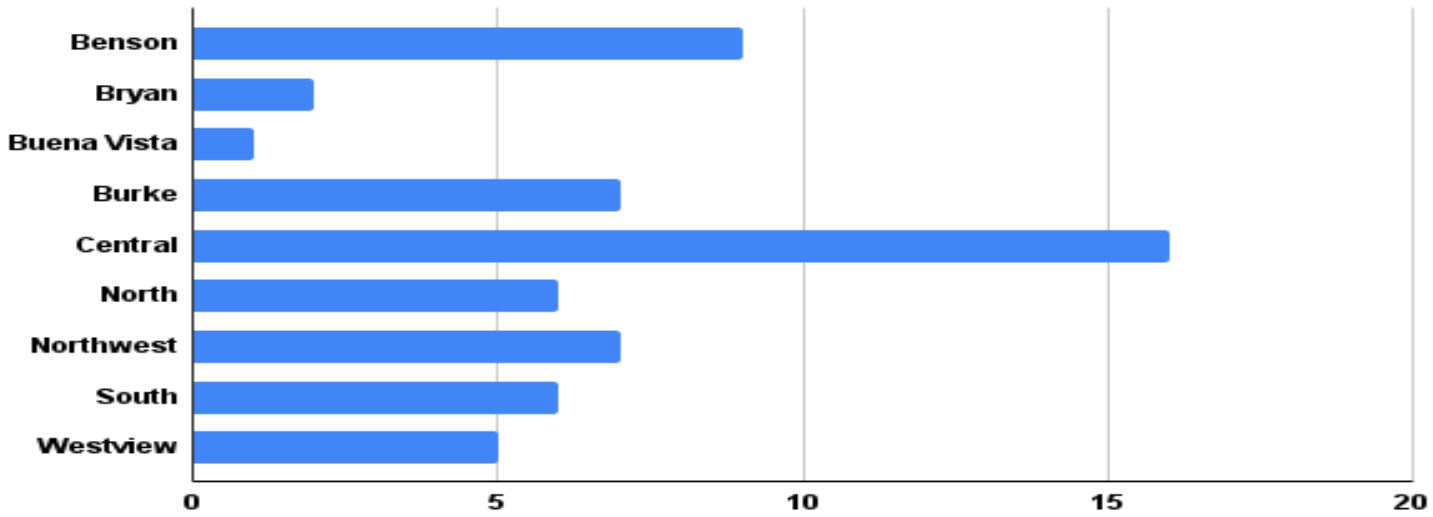
It is the goal of the Central High Register to represent the student body in issues affecting their lives as young people and students. If you feel that we are not covering an issue that is important to you, we welcome contributing writers who bring fresh ideas to the issues.

If you would like to write a story for your student newspaper, please contact Broderick Hilgenkamp at broderick.hilgenkamp@ops.org or come to room 029 to discuss your idea.

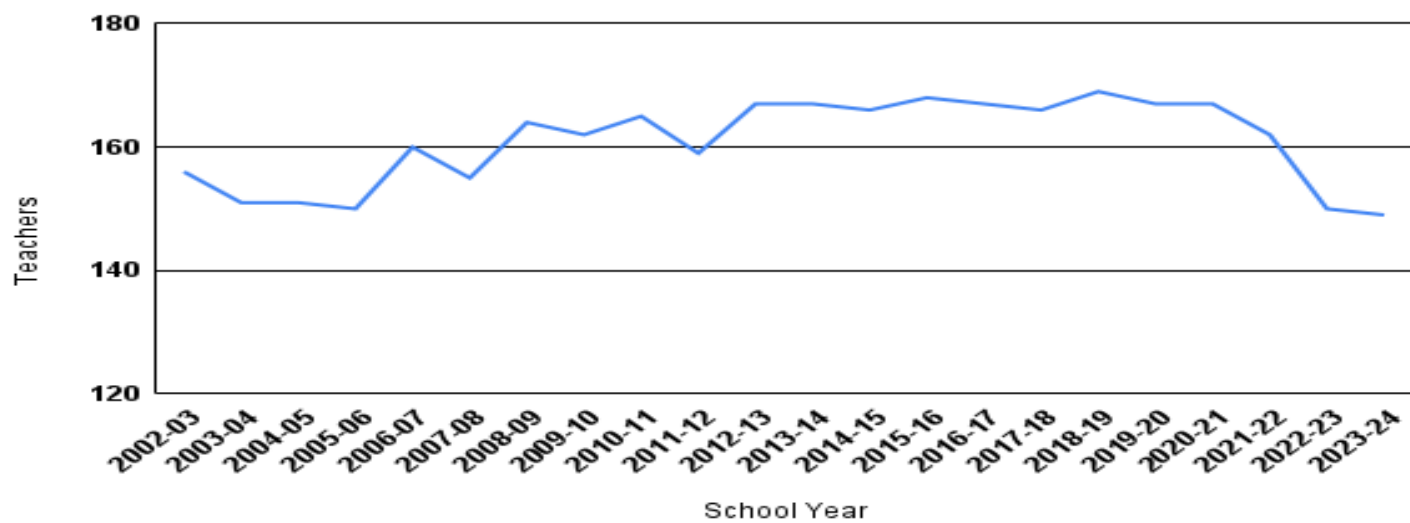
Teacher Shortage continues

TEACHERS from page 1

Unfilled Positions by High School



Central teachers by school year



class in addition to overseeing the IB program; he said the class can be a lot of extra work on top of his preexisting responsibilities.

Larson thanked the teachers from other departments for their willingness to teach math classes that needed to be covered. “The other departments knew we were hurting and stepped up to help our department,” Larson said.

The special education department has the second-highest number of vacancies, with four. Special Education Department Head Julianne Fant recognizes that this creates problems for the department.

Special education instruction teachers work individually with students with special needs to work on their Individualized Educational Plans (IEP), a legal document that outlines learning goals and strategies.

Special education teachers take on caseloads made up of a certain number of IEP cases. The average caseload for a special education teacher is 35 IEPs, which Fant said can be overwhelming for many teachers in the department.

Fant herself has a caseload of 22 IEPs, when she said that it was unusual for special education department heads to take on any cases only a few years ago. “It is becoming quite a lot of work, and I just try my best to control what we can control,” Fant said.

OPS Executive Director of Staffing Gregory Betts takes part in recruitment efforts in an attempt to fix the staffing issues for the district. The district attended 136 recruitment events

in 20 states last year, Betts said.

Betts said that any prospective math teachers who apply to OPS will be offered a job at Central before any other school. These efforts have not currently yielded any new hires in the math and special education departments at Central.

“We are in a national teacher shortage, which is definitely indicated at some of our buildings,” Betts said. “We’ve talked to our universities and colleges and teacher programs, and they are seeing a drop in the number of students that are applying in math, science, and special education.”

Jane McGill contributed to this report.

Central welcomes new students with Friendly Faces Table

Lily Hartley
staff writer

For the 23-24 school year, Central welcomes the Friendly Face Table, designed to ease the transition for kids who recently immigrated to the United States. The table is run by English Learners Department Head Karen Brown and staffed by student volunteers from Latino Leaders and National Honors Society. The table is located in the cafeteria on both A and B days during all lunch periods.

Anxiety over where to sit at lunch is a common experience for students on their first day at a new school. The table is designated for any students who are new to Central, especially students who have just recently immigrated to the United States. The table offers students the opportunity to be able to meet new people who may share similar experiences or interests, share stories, and calm the first day jitters.

As the EL department head, Brown sees this dynamic first hand. Brown said current EL students have told her they wish the table existed when they arrived at Central. “I wanted a place for all new students to come in and be able to sit in the cafeteria or courtyard, especially if they were EL students and didn’t know anybody and have somewhere to sit,” Brown said.

“We have some leaders that we identified in the EL Department all from different countries, that speak different languages, that were great to have involved,” Brown said.

Information regarding The Friendly Face Table is spread mostly by word of mouth. Students who sit at the table have felt that it should be more widely known. “I think this is a really good idea. If someone comes to school and they need help, they can get it,” junior Abdul Mohammadi said. “When people see our table, they know it’s reserved. We’re VIP!” Ephraim Mpona said.



Karen Brown, right, interacts with students at the Friendly Faces table. Mauro Gutierrez | The Register



Above is Kutti's Mugshot. Photo Courtesy of Fulton County Sheriff's Office



Photo Courtesy of The O-Book Archives

INDICTED from page 1
According to the indictment, a sprawling document laying out the charges against each of the codefendants, Kutti was recruited by the leader of the organization "Black Voices for Trump" and a co-defendant in the indictment, Harrison Floyd. Kutti, now facing three felony charges under the indictment, has denied any involvement and has said on social media that the reports of her interaction with Freeman were "false."

Kutti did not respond to a request for comment by The Register.
Kutti, a self-described "media manipulator," "political strategist and solutionist" and "equal opportunity capitalist," played basketball, served as a student government representative and sang in the choir during her time as a Central student. According to the Omaha World-Herald, Kutti won an NAACP essay contest as a teenager that sent her on an all-expenses-paid trip to New York City.

After attending Omaha Central, Kutti reported that she attended the University of Illinois. Michele Roberts, executive director of the Central High School Foundation, confirmed that Kutti attended Central, but said that the foundation has no record of her graduating.

Kutti did not attend Central for her senior year and did not appear in the O-Book after her sophomore year. Kutti declined to comment on whether she graduated high school. After university, Kutti set up shop in Chicago, where she ran high-end stores known for their profane window displays. According to the Chicago Sun-Times, in 2008, she displayed a sign in a store window reading "hot ass sale," which prompted an ordinance violation.

Kutti was a stylist for Regina King from 2015-2017, worked as a publicist for R. Kelly until 2018 and served on the executive staff of Ye, formerly known as Kanye West, though the timeframe is unknown. Regina King is a prominent American actor/director and the recipient of various awards ranging from the Golden Globe to four Primetime Emmy Awards. R. Kelly, a former R&B artist and now a convicted sex criminal, is now serving a 20-year sentence for child sex crimes.

Ye is an American rapper and singer who has grown into a problematic public figure in recent years. He lost his record-breaking deal with Adidas over antisemitic comments that he made in the media and has been on the record supporting former President Trump, although he ran his own bid for president in 2020.

Kutti worked on the campaign of Angela Stanton King, who attempted to fill the seat held by civil rights advocate John Lewis in Georgia's 5th congressional district. In January of 2020, Kutti registered as a lobbyist for Red White and Bloom, a Canadian cannabis company operating in Granville, Illinois.

Kutti has an often ambiguous and self-contradictory political track record. She has

gone on the record multiple times in support of former President Donald J. Trump but donated \$3,550 to Hilary Clinton's presidential campaign in 2008. According to an article in Slate, Kutti was an outspoken critic of the Republicans and the administration of George W. Bush before her entanglements with former President Trump.

Even more confusingly, Kutti displayed extremely political messages in the window of her shoe store, G'bani, during the 2004 presidential election. The New York Times described the window in a 2006 article:

Before the 2004 presidential election the storefront was filled with dismembered mannequins spattered in fake blood under an Iraqi flag and little signs saying "Oil," with the headline "Vote World Peace." For Black History Month 2004 there were two mannequins, one draped in white, the other in bright fabrics, under "Whites Only" and "Colored Only" signs. They one-upped that last year, placing a poster-size swastika, a Klansman's portrait and a picture of the burning World Trade Center behind the words "Never Again."

When asked about alienating customers, Kutti responded that her customer base was "not the conservative Christian right."

Kutti's political backpedal is a drastic one. But more than that, Kutti has claimed to work for people that have outright denied knowing her. Kutti claimed that she represented the queen of Jordan, Rania Al Abdullah, and Omaha native boxer Terrence Crawford, both of whom denied the statement. Kutti's LinkedIn profile claims that she still works as a representative for Crawford as his "Director of Celebrity and Media Relations."

Although it is unclear what exactly catalyzed Kutti's shift from staunch anti-war Democrat to vehement supporter of President Trump, she claims that working for two beset former stars – one currently imprisoned on child sex charges and the other a controversy-prone attention-seeking rapper – influenced her thought processes.

"Working with Ye and Mr. Kelly truly made me understand the amount of false accusations that can be given to strong people such as Trump," Kutti said in an interview with WBEZ, a Chicago NPR affiliate. "I am no politician and have no interest in being one. I would like to quote Ye, one of my favorite people I have worked with: 'The media is trying to crucify me like I'm Christ.'"

Kutti said in an Instagram post that she hopes to become the Press Secretary to Donald Trump, if he is re-elected.

Fanni Willis, Fulton County's district attorney who oversees most of the Atlanta area, hopes to try Kutti, along with the rest of those indicted in Fulton County, as quickly as possible. Kutti's future is uncertain, but she has indicated she will fight the charges and has called them "egregious and false."

Alumni reconnect to Central at fall reunions

Katie Besancon
staff writer

Alumni who graduated from Central as far back as 1961 are returning to Central to see all the updates completed since their time at the school. The reunions are planned by the class officers of the reunion's graduating class and the Central High Alumni Association, helping them get the word out through social media and emails.

This year, the reunions consist of a football game, if Central plays at home that week, where the alumni are recognized on the Strive OC Broadcast. "I go to the reunion football game to make sure I stock up on my Central gear, which I always need more of," said Jennifer Moyer, who graduated in '93.

Many of these reunion classes will gather after the game, where alumni catch up and talk since many do not live in Omaha or see each other often anymore.

The following Saturday morning, alumni come to Central and get a tour of the same halls they walked as students many years ago. "The floors still have the same creak that they had when we were there," said Tin James, class of 1993. "A lot of the same décor they had back in the day has not changed in 35 years," James said.

For some alumni, the tour is their first time seeing the new library and arts addition. "It was fantastic to see the progress that Central has made in keeping current and modern design even when it is the oldest school in Nebraska," James said. For the class of 1993, for the class of 1993, during their last reunion the Central Foundation was beginning to introduce the plans for Central's new arts and library edition, now they get to see those plans brought to life.

Following the tour of Central, there is a dinner party hosted at various restaurants around the downtown area, like the Omaha Tap house or Mattress Factory, where alumni can catch up on everyone's lives since high school while staying close to the building.

Many alumni are coming back to see how much the school has evolved since their time in high school.

"I felt a lot of pride that I was a graduate of Central," James said. "I hope that the students appreciate their time there as much as I did."

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Alumnus Henry Cordes helps solve decades-old cold case

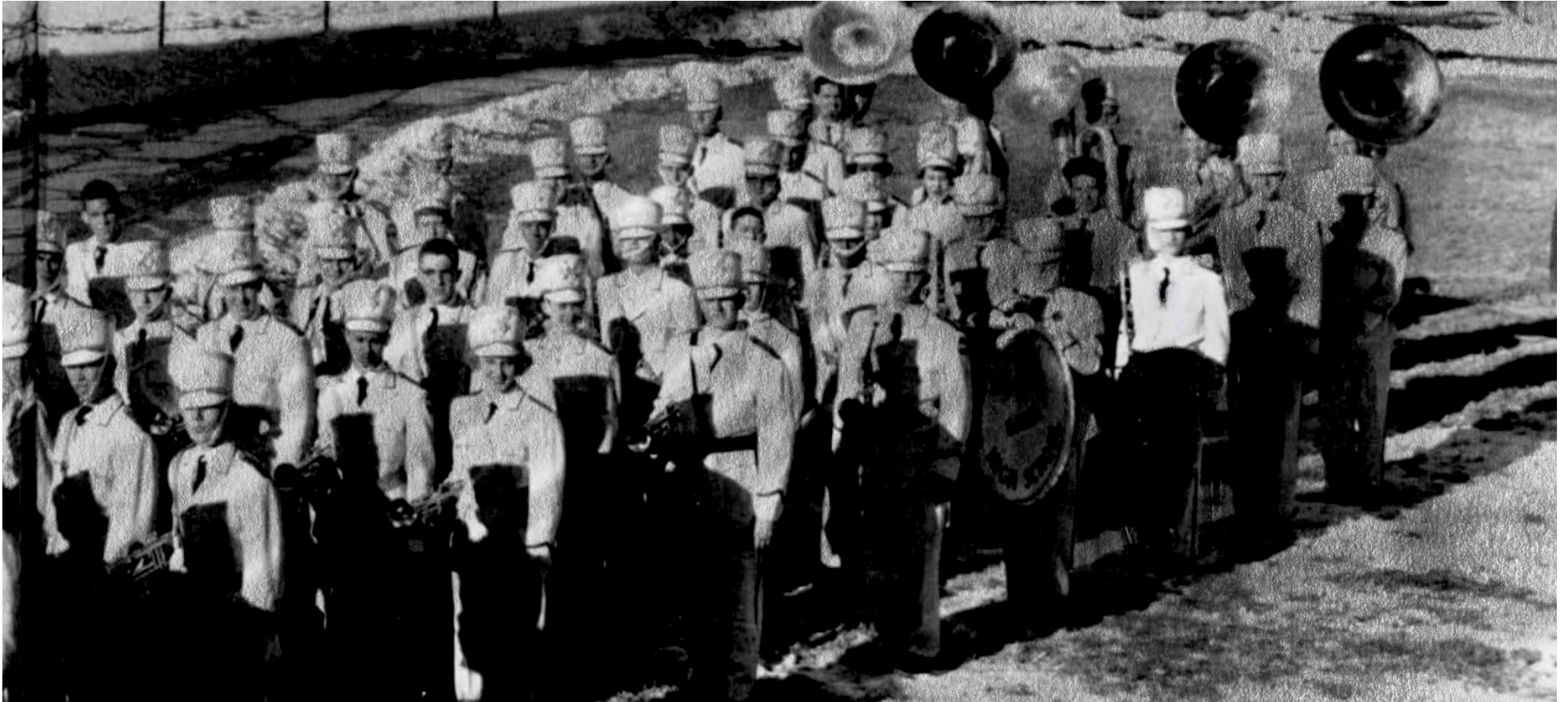


Photo Courtesy of **The O-Book**. Edited by Cris Batallion

Isabel Hoiberg
digital editor

The case of Leslie Arnold, a former Central student, went cold in 1967 after his elaborate escape from the Nebraska State Penitentiary. Fifty years later, Central alumni Henry Cordes played a key role in solving the forgotten case.

William and Opal Arnold's lives were taken by fatal gunshots at 6477 Poppleton Avenue in the fall of 1958. After his parents refused to let him take the car to a drive-in, Leslie Arnold decided to kill them and bury their bodies in the backyard.

"If that were really the case, there would be parents dropping dead in Omaha every weekend," said Omaha World-Herald Senior Enterprise Reporter Henry Cordes. "I just knew there was way more to the story than the very shallow reporting that was done at the time."

Cordes has been writing for the Omaha World-Herald for four decades and has been recognized as one of Nebraska's most influential journalists. He joined the staff of the paper as a sportswriter months after graduating from Central. After graduating from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, he joined the news staff, covering crime. According to the Omaha Central High School Foundation, Cordes is a five-time winner of the University of Nebraska Lincoln's Sorensen Award. He had a story in Poynter Institute's book "Best Newspaper Writing", and he has won multiple national awards.

"I was a Central student back when I first heard of Leslie," Cordes said. "Leslie and I actually had kind of a lot in common. We were both young students at Central, living in the Aksarben neighborhood. We were both in the band. We were both on the track team."

Though, the case did not strike his mind again until around 15 years later. Cordes was reporting at the capitol building in Lincoln, speaking to Ardyce Bohlke, a former member of the legislature. During their meeting, Bohlke told him the story of the Arnold family murders. Now, he could finally attach a name to the story.

He started by looking at old Omaha World-Herald clip-

pings. After seeing the scarce reporting done at the time, Cordes knew there was a lot more investigation to be done. He decided to put the story in his idea file, a place to put story ideas that you want to end up reporting on.

It was not until 1999 that he started making some phone calls, talking to old neighbors who were telling him, "The mom was mentally ill, the kid had a temper, the mom seemed to really mistreat the boys and was very arbitrary in the way she dealt with him," Cordes said.

"Right around the early 2000s, I met a cop who had a whole bunch of original records from the case," Cordes said. "It included the evaluations the psychologist had given Arnold at the time of his arrest, and it went deep into the kind of dysfunction that was going on in the Arnold house."

Around the same time, Cordes was able to get in contact with Jim Harding, the convict with whom Arnold had escaped from prison.

"He told me for the first time publicly how they had escaped, how they pulled it off," Cordes said.

They had slipped through the bars they had sawed off, climbed a 12-foot-tall fence topped with barbed wire and ended up on a Chicago-bound bus, not to be seen again.

After visiting Arnold's former classmates and house, going through old files and almost 20 years of research, the 50th anniversary of Arnold's escape came around in 2017. Cordes deemed it as a perfect time to put everything he learned onto paper.

"I told my editor it's now or never. That's what became the series called, 'The Mystery of Leslie Arnold,'" Cordes said. "It was a great story that ultimately would help lead to the solving of the case indirectly. The US attorney's office in Nebraska, partly because of those articles, became interested in the case again. This agent named Matt Westover was assigned to the case in 2020. I was one of the first people he called. Nobody knew the case the way I knew this case, so it made sense for him to ask me questions about things he learned."

In 2020, Westover got James Arnold, Leslie's brother, to agree to provide a DNA sample to hopefully find a match, but

they would not find a close match until 2022. It was Leslie Arnold's son looking to find out more about his father, who he thought was an orphan from Chicago.

John Damon was Arnold's alias. His new life started in Chicago, marrying a mother of four who waited tables. He became an independent traveling salesman and ended up living all around the U.S. He divorced, got remarried and had children of his own. His final destination was Australia, where he lived for 13 years before he died from complications from blood clots in 2010.

"I was excited as heck, for sure, about solving the case," Cordes said. "I just couldn't wait to tell people that I had this incredible knowledge, but I also felt a little bit of sadness too because this story has kind of become a big part of my life. I spent years looking into it, and I've always felt a personal connection to the story. Part of it, frankly, was the Central High connection."

Composting program aims to cut down lunchroom waste

Becca Rock
staff writer

COMPOSTING from page 1

Solutions. They discussed logistics, the aesthetics of the compost bins, the cost and how the system would work. Finally, this program was approved by Central's administration and the district representatives, and the contract was sent to the OPS's Legal Counsel over the summer. During July, Sain said there was no communication between her and representatives from the district about the proposed composting program in the 2023-2024 school year. After the lack of communication, Sain advocated for herself and went to the school to ensure the contract was still in the process. When the contract was signed off, implementation began.

To implement composting, educating the

student body needed to be accomplished. At the beginning of the school year, during student's Advisement, or "Eagle Time," the idea of composting was introduced. During lunch periods, teacher lunch aids monitored the bins to make sure the students were composting. The Central Green Team, an organization of Central students founded by Sain and dedicated to promoting sustainability at the school, will be involved in the future to better the program itself.

"It was illogical that Central was not already composting," Sain said. Central has been using compostable trays since the switch between plastic and paper trays. Central produced 300 pounds of food waste a day, equivalent to 27 tons per year, according to an analysis conducted by Hillside Solutions in April 2023.

The compostable trays stacked were 16 feet tall each day, and within a school year, that stack was taller than the Burj Kalifa, the tallest building in the world.

With the composting program in place, 57% of previous trash is being diverted to compost, according to an estimate from Hillside Solutions. The waste management firm projected that the composting program would cut the school's plastic bag use by 80 percent, saving Central over 11,000 plastic bags per year. Food waste in landfills affects the planet's air and water. Food scraps at the landfill produce a gas called methane, a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Additionally, there is a lot of water in food, and when this water combines with other items in the landfill, a toxic sludge called leachate forms.

Leachate leaks into groundwater, dirtying lakes and rivers. Composting food scraps can save space in the landfill and avoid methane gases and leachate.

What you need to know about the International Baccalaureate classes being offered to all, according to Central students

Arisa Lattison
arts & culture editor

Central started offering IB Theory of Knowledge (ToK) and IB Social Cultural Anthropology to non-IB students in 2021. IB Coordinator Paul Nielson said the change was made to draw more students to the program.

"All 16 pathways at Central are competing for students and we wanted to offer classes that might entice students to want to join the IBDP."

Central's Diploma Programme has long struggled to recruit a diverse group of students. A Register investigation in May found that white and economically privileged students are vastly over-represented in Central's small IB program. Over half of Central's IB program are white, compared to a third of Central's overall student body. While over half of Central students are economically disadvantaged, only 17 percent of IB students are.

"We are always looking to diversify Honors, AP and IB classes at Central, but we also want to grow our program," Nielson said. "Diversity in any program allows more input from a larger cross section of students."

Junior Hattie Moeller enrolled in IB Social Cultural Anthropology class after it was recommended to her by sociology teacher Casey Denton.

Moeller said that the amount of homework was similar to her honors and AP classes. Although they have more class readings and discussions than the average class, it's made up for by how much they cover during school.

"We hold critical thinking discussions, and seminars similar to honors classes," she said. "The only difference is that we relate most content and ideas back to IB terminology."

Another thing students may be worried about is the social inclusivity despite it being a predominantly IBDP class. Moeller believed it to be a welcoming group.

"There are only seven or eight of us in the class together, and [four] of us are non-IB, so we have become friends."

She said she learned a lot of things from taking IB Anthropology and wants students to know the class is intriguing and inviting.

"Enrolling in this course along with my experience in Sociology last year has given me the ability to examine human interactions and see the world from the personal perspective of different

cultures."

IB Theory of Knowledge is a class Central hopes to implement next year. In past years the course was not offered due to an insufficient amount of interest

Since it covers the concepts of one, IB ToK is a philosophy class that allows students to think about knowledge, the acquisition of it, and how to apply it to their other subjects.

"In an ideal IB world, kids should be thinking that ToK should both help them in all of their other courses and influence the way they approach them," said Shane Thomas, who teaches Theory of Knowledge 1-2.

Thomas emphasizes the importance of self-awareness and believes having a high sense of self-awareness helps any student succeed because of the "thinking about thinking" component.

Thomas doesn't want students to be intimidated by the class. He believes his students find the class approachable and fun and encourages any students interested in taking the class to reach out to him with questions.

Central plans to open more IB classes if the current ones gain more traction among the student body. This would be on a year-to-year basis depending on student interests according to Nielson.

From the classroom to the chapel: Berzins' delicate balance

Steven Dickerson
staff writer

On weekdays, you can find Kristoff Berzins on the third-floor teaching biology classes or coaching the varsity swim team after school. But on the weekends, he transforms into a dynamic wedding planner and bartender.

Berzins spends most of his free time working for his wife's business, Magnolia Events and Creations, a service that plans, creates and organizes events. Since its establishment in 2016, it has created all kinds of events, but mainly weddings.

Berzins does a variety of tasks for Magnolia, but mostly bartends. He often mentions how stressful the work can be. "You're the CEO, the CFO, the marketing department and public relations," he said. "It never ends." To help ease his workload, Berzins hires students to help him and his wife.

He asks former biology students to see which students are interested. "We get a little help; they get some cash in their pocket." He said the students help his wife more than he does, as they assist with decoration, loading/unloading equipment and cleaning up.

"It's a long day's work, but it's worth it," sophomore Katie Besancon said. "I love seeing all the weddings and knowing that I helped make them," she said. She began working for Berzins this summer after being in Honors Biology her freshman year. Hiring people like Besancon allows Berzins to focus on managing the business.

Running the events and finding people to help isn't the only stressor, though. Berzins said balancing teaching and Magnolia can become very strenuous. "I make it work, but it



Kristoff Berzins, science teacher, plans weddings as well. CRIS BATAILLON | The Register wears me out," he said.

He's also working on getting his doctorate while teaching Biology, Honors Biology and IB Biology. Alongside bartending, he is an ordained minister with the Universal Life Church and

the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster, which means he

can officiate weddings.

Members of the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster, which was created to protest the Kansas Board of Education's 2005 decision to allow the teaching of creationism in schools, wear pirate clothing at functions, have a beer volcano in the afterlife and regard Fridays as religious holidays.

He may be busy, but the money is worth it, as being able to save for the future and earn enough to do things he wants to do are huge benefits, Berzins explained. "Everything comes down to money," he said. "It allows me to be free and have fun."

Nonetheless, Berzins said if you cannot maintain a healthy work-life balance between your social life and your jobs, the money might not be worth it. "There is no point in earning all the money in the world if you can't stop to enjoy life as well."

Berzins enjoys Magnolia just as much as he loves teaching and said getting to help his wife makes him happy. "I love getting to see the weddings and styles," he said.

"It gives me a lot of satisfaction," he said when it comes to planning and creating weddings with wide budgets and extravagant venues. He adores the fact that his wife can get more creative and that he can have a fun time making the sets look cool. Those moments make it all worth it. "I look forward to the future, and I am excited to see Magnolia grow," he said.

Central welcomes three foreign exchange students

Fiona Bryant
opinion editor

Three European exchange students are attending Central High School this year.

Carl-Johan Magnusson – Örebro, Sweden

For Carl-Johan Magnusson, spending his junior year abroad is all about having fun and getting to know himself better. Compared to schooling in his native Örebro, Sweden, Magnusson described school here as "easy." He will be required to repeat his Swedish junior year to stay on track academically. To Magnusson, experiencing Central as a senior serves as his "year off" to focus on sports and his social life.

With academics being less of a focus at Central than in Sweden, Magnusson can devote more time to playing center receiver in some of Central's varsity and junior varsity football games. In Sweden, Magnusson only practiced American football twice a week. Magnusson has also found time to continue his hobbies of exploring, playing games, and watching TV.

Magnusson's host family is planning a trip to Chicago, and he also wants to visit California. Prior to studying abroad in Nebraska, he has enjoyed travels to Denmark and Florida.

While he enjoyed trying chicken and rice, American food's calorie and sugar content were a culture shock. Magnusson said the worst part of being an exchange student is the difference in school start times and rules compared to in Sweden; Magnusson's Swedish high school starts later in the morning and is open campus. After completing his last two years of Swedish high school, he plans to continue his education at a Swedish university, although he is unsure of his area of study.

Zita Eyskens – Antwerp, Belgium

Zita Eyskens of Antwerp, Belgium, became interested in studying abroad after seeing her aunt host exchange students. After a year of paperwork and applying to the program, Eyskens is a senior at Central for just the first semester.

"I didn't really know anything about [the] US and it looks really big," said Eyskens of her choice to study in the United States. She enjoys that Omaha has many activities and chances to be independent compared to being in Belgium with her parents.

Even though she would like to visit New York, Florida, and California, to Eyskens, "[Nebraska's] like a real view on America instead of [a] too big view."

Eyskens has traveled around Europe, Egypt and Türkiye, but specifically enjoyed her trip to Greece without her parents.

Compared to in Antwerp, drinking laws and rules about opening external school doors differ greatly here. Teacher-student interactions are a positive culture shock for Eyskens, however. "I think that the teachers are nice," said Eyskens. "In Belgium, you can't really communicate with them"

Eyskens also enjoys playing setter for Central's volleyball team, a sport she has been playing since she was 4 years old.

For the remainder of the semester, Eyskens looks forward to celebrating Thanksgiving and continuing her psychology and forensic science classes. After graduating from her Belgian high school, Eyskens would like to attend an American college. She plans to study psychology or forensic science, although she is still unsure of where to live after college.

Valentin Leitner – Salzburg, Austria

Austrian exchange student Valentin Leitner's friends in Salzburg recommended studying abroad after their own experiences, and Leitner really liked the idea.

He said that learnin about American culture and improving his English will help with jobs and for if he wants to live in the US. While he is unsure of which type of university to attend, Leitner is looking at attending Austrian and German universities after graduation. "[With] this experience, I can basically go anywhere I want," Leitner said.

Prior to studying abroad, Leitner has traveled to the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Croatia, Slovenia, and his favorite, Spain. When deciding upon a location in the US, Leitner said that the placement was about finding the perfect host family. Leitner's foreign exchange agency, Education First, places students based on compatibility with a host family.

Leitner is living with the same family as Carl-Johan Magnusson. "It's kind of a new experience for me to have a brother," said Leitner. "I'm an only child in Austria."

Leitner will miss celebrating milestone birthdays with his friends in Austria, however. "I'm just on the phone with them, but I don't regret going here," said Leitner.

Compared to schoolwork in Austria, Leitner said that Advanced Placement classes are challenging but that American schools offer more fun options for classes. He is trying to keep up with his educational sequence in Austria because he will have to revise his studies next summer.

In his free time, Leitner is the kicker for Central's football team. "I'm the guy with the orange cleats," Leitner said. Playing American football and the overall American school sports experience is new to him. In Austria, Leitner played soccer and hopes to play in Central's spring season. To Leitner, American food portions and ingredients are the biggest culture shock. "You guys really like cheese," Leitner said. "You put cheese everywhere."

Poe takes over as O-Book editor-in-chief

Jane McGill
executive editor

Senior Eh Khu Poe will serve as Editor-in-Chief of The O-Book this school year, having been selected to lead Central's yearbook by Adviser Brody Hilgenkamp in May.

Poe, who goes by her last name, will oversee a staff of 21 students tasked with creating an end-of-year publication that commemorates the people, events and culture of Central High School during the 2023-2024 school year. Senior Jill Bertino will assist Poe in editing the yearbook in the position of managing editor.

"It was really important to Poe to create a culture of getting things done," Hilgenkamp said. "Something that I didn't do a good job of as a first-year adviser was figuring out how to apply accountability to students. Poe was someone who was really reliable with getting things done and saw the consequences of [staff members not doing their work]."

Poe joined the staff of The O-Book as a junior after being denied her preference of becoming a photographer for The Register due to scheduling conflicts. As a first-year staff member, Hilgenkamp said he noticed her taking an active role in motivating other staff members to complete their work on time.

"Even though she wasn't in an editor's role last year, she started to show a lot of leadership qualities even though that wasn't a part of her job title," Hilgenkamp recalled.

Poe's appointment follows a tumultuous year for Central's yearbook, which was plagued by a string of difficulties following the departure of longtime adviser Hillary Blayney in 2022. During the 2022-2023 school year, staff members frequently turned in assignments late or incomplete, and deadlines were inconsistent or poorly communicated to staff. As a result of these issues, the yearbook, originally slated to be issued to the student body prior to the seniors' last day, was not distributed until the last week of school. Seniors picked up their yearbooks

from school along with their caps and gowns for graduation.

While acknowledging the struggles the yearbook endured, Poe said she remains proud of the work she did to accurately represent the student body.

"I put 100 percent of my effort into it," she said. "I didn't want to disappoint anyone. I wanted everyone I put in the yearbook to be proud of what I did."

To combat idleness among the staff and confusion surrounding deadlines, Poe has introduced a new workflow requiring staff members to complete a spread for the yearbook every two weeks.

Poe succeeds senior Ella Jaksha, who left the yearbook's top job at the end of the 2022-2023 school year, alongside Assistant Editor Sarah Spomer. Jaksha said that her departure was motivated both by her busy class schedule and her view that she had been poorly prepared to lead the yearbook without Blayney's guidance.

"I had only done yearbook sophomore year before becoming editor," she said. "I wasn't really expecting to be on my own with a new adviser, so I really did not know what I was doing at all."

She attributed the yearbook's delay to a disorderly workflow and poor communication between staff members. "We were not equipped to meet deadlines with the organization of the whole process," she said. "As the year went on, I did not have any expectations of [the yearbook] being on time or accurately edited."

Jaksha expressed optimism at the direction of the yearbook under Poe and Bertino, praising the work ethic they exhibited while she was editor.

"When Poe and Jill found out [the yearbook was going to be late], they really stepped up to help others with their spreads," she said. "I think they both have really good creative direction."

Poe selected Scrapbook/Y2K Magazine as the theme for

the 2023-2024 O-Book, an aesthetic she described as "poppy, groovy, vibey," crediting Pinterest as the inspiration for the theme. "With scrapbook, you can get messy with it, and it doesn't have to be so formal," she said. "I feel like the staff can have fun and show creativity in the spreads."

Poe cited ensuring the yearbook is visually pleasing and distributed to students on time as her top priority. She emphasized a commitment to feature a more diverse group of students in the yearbook, including more underclassmen and students of color. She also vowed to crack down on staff members fabricating quotes, a practice that has remained common at The O-Book despite being officially prohibited.

The 2023-24 O-Book is set to be distributed to all students the week of May 6, 2024.



CRIS BATAILLON | The Register

Levy, Yale to lead Register

Ann Carlson
sports editor

Charlie Yale and Ella Levy will lead The Register this year, having been appointed by advisor Broderick Hilgenkamp. Levy will focus on the print side, while Yale will focus on the web side.

The idea of having two editors came to Hilgenkamp after the application process.

"They both did a good job of staying on top of what they were supposed to do and provided strong ideas," Hilgenkamp said. "I knew the two of them would work well together and be a good fit."

Both Levy and Yale got involved in the school newspaper during their freshman year.

"We had Intro to Journalism together," Levy said. "In a way, it's a full circle moment, moving from just staff writers to now running the newspaper together."

Sophomore year, Yale worked as the web editor and Levy was a staff writer. Junior year, Yale was the sports editor and Levy was the opinion editor. Levy and Yale are involved in many activities at Central. Yale is president of the Amnesty International club, a debate captain and a broadcaster for Central athletics. Levy is on the varsity tennis team, National Honors Society's Communication Officer and a senior class representative.

"Being part of so many different parts of Central connects me with so many different people," Levy said. "As an editor, I'm hoping to connect different people with The Register."

Last year, Yale wrote an article with a fellow staff member on LB575, which bans transgender athletes from playing high school sports in Nebraska.

"This was my proudest moment from last year," Yale said. "I got to talk to senators, which helped me gain more experience listening to people with varying opinions."

Levy's proudest moment of last year was the application process for editor in chief.

"Having the confidence to try and put myself out there for editor was the highlight of last year," Levy said. "I put a lot of hard work in the application process, and it paid off."

Levy's goal this year is to make everyone on the staff feel welcome and excited to tell stories.

"We will be holding staff meetings every month where we will talk about the positives and things that need to be changed as well as name a writer of the month," Levy said. "Bonding like this will help everyone know they can go to each other and feel more accomplished."

Yale agreed with Levy and said, "Ultimately, the goal is to get six issues out this year, all with 20 pages." "The future is very bright for The Register this year and beyond."

RiverFront opens to public, features skating rink and more

Hadley Forsen-Yepes
chief copy editor

The Omaha RiverFront, a publicly and privately funded \$325 million project, is now open to the public.

The City of Omaha contributed \$50 million, while local philanthropists donated the remaining funds. The 72-acre RiverFront resides in downtown Omaha and consists of three parks, which are all connected: the Gene Leahy Mall, the Heartland of America Park and the Lewis and Clark Landing. The Gene Leahy Mall opened in July 2022 and has been a popular attraction for Omahans and tourists since. Amenities of the mall include a children's playground, hammocks, a pavilion, a dog park and a large expanse of grass.

Over a year later, on Aug. 18, the City of Omaha, the Downtown Riverfront Trust and the Omaha Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority (MECA) reopened the Heartland of America Park and the Lewis and Clark Landing, which had both undergone four years of construction. MECA is a nonprofit organization that manages the CHI Health Center and Charles Schwab Field, providing security for the spaces it oversees.

The park contains Conagra Lake and a coupled amphitheater, a skate ribbon, bocce ball courts, hammocks and more. The landing contains a playground even larger than the Gene Leahy Mall's, volleyball courts, and an "urban sandy beach." It is also the home to the Kiewit Luminarium, a recently opened interactive science museum.

OJB Landscape Architecture was behind

the RiverFront's structures and layout, with Lanoha Nurseries, Miller Electric, Outdoor Recreation Products, C2 and Shawmark Concrete also contributing to the renovations.

The parks are an approximately four-minute drive, or a 10-minute ORBT ride away from Central, and many Central students have already been quick to take advantage of their amenities. Senior Ren Livingston, for example, unknowingly planned an excursion to the Gene Leahy Mall on the night of the newly opened parks' unveilings.

"It was my birthday, so I was out for dinner downtown and decided to go on a walk afterward at Gene Leahy Mall, not realizing it was the first night the new [parks were] open," Livingston said. Ultimately, she ventured around the Heartland of America Park and stumbled upon the skate ribbon, where a live DJ provided music. Livingston credited roller skating as the highlight of her visit to the RiverFront.

Omaha has been without a roller-skating rink since the closure of Skate Daze in 2018. With the opening of the skate ribbon, Omahans no longer must drive to the nearby city of Bellevue to roller skate. The ribbon is even free to use, and skates are available to rent for \$5.

Skating was also popular with junior Calahan Hernandez, who spent "countless hours" on the ribbon. In the winter, the roller-skating rink will become an ice-skating rink, which Hernandez looks forward to, as ice skating has been popular among his friends in recent years.

Hernandez admires the beauty of the Heartland of America Park, with its remarkable views of downtown Omaha and winding paths that overlook the Missouri River and Conagra Lake. But there was something else that caught his eye.

"The landscaping was well thought out and used many native plants, which intrigued the people I attended the park with to look into more of Nebraska's native plants," Hernandez said.

According to The Riverfront's website, 15 tree varieties and 55 species of shrubs, grasses, perennials and aquatic plants are rooted in the parks: "The RiverFront landscape design also aims to revegetate much of the park space, recreating desirable habitats for some of the small wildlife that call the Missouri River home."

The parks were also constructed with sustainability in mind. The website states that, "Items such as artwork, benches and handrails were upcycled for continuous use; limestone has been carefully removed and is being utilized in another city park; and pallets of bricks were collected and stored for preservation of the Old Market's historic cobblestone streets."

Hernandez looks forward to picnicking with his friends at the park, which he thinks offers a welcoming environment with its open green spaces and shrubbery. Livingston also believes the skate ribbon and the hammocks will be particularly popular among high schoolers.

Additionally, the MAHA Music Festival, frequently attended by Central students, is

moving from Aksarben Village to the Heartland of America Park next summer. Hernandez is excited about this change of scenery but dreads the chaos of parking downtown that will come with it.

All three parks that make up the RiverFront are hosts to playgrounds that young children – and even some daring teens – can climb, swing and slide on. "I know I would've loved to have been able to go there as a younger kid, so I think it's great for families," Livingston said.

Another favored destination for families is the Kiewit Luminarium. "The Luminarium is an interactive science museum that teaches kids about different aspects of science in ways that are easy to comprehend," senior Beth Mergens explained.

Mergens attended the museum with her family friends and their 10-year-old son. She thinks that its exhibits were perfectly geared toward children his age. "[The Luminarium] benefits Omaha because it is accessible to everyone of all ages and makes learning fun," Mergens said.

"I think the Omaha RiverFront is an exciting new development for the Omaha community. You can tell a lot of funding and work went into the parks, and that's cool to see," Livingston said.

Hernandez has similar sentiments. "Public parks are important for education, fun, and community events. I believe the new parks offer all of those and more," he said.

opinion

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STUDENTS SOUND OFF

Enforcement of dress code represents generational divide

Drilling down on torso coverings leads to student discontentment, discourse

Becca Rock
staff writer

I have been at Central High for two years, and previously, the dress code has never been enforced. Yet, during the first weeks of school, with heat indexes reaching close to 115 degrees, primarily female students were told that their clothing was inappropriate for school. School should not be the place where students feel ashamed by what they are wearing; learning should be the only worry.

I conducted a survey for the student body of Central to respond to the issues of the dress code, and I received 54 responses. Seventy-Five percent of the people surveyed were dress-coded for showing their torso, and showing one's torso is against the OPS Code of Conduct. Since this has been in place for many years, the question I turned to is why it only started being enforced this year. I had gotten no responses from teachers and administrators other than that the dress code is the policy and that they are told to remind students of it. Some of the teachers that dress code students often make students feel as if they have been shamed for what they are wearing. Camilia Doña-Muñoz said, "I got pulled aside and told that what I picked out to wear that morning, which I felt confident and pretty in, was wrong, and it totally ruined my self-confidence for the day."

I feel as if there is a generational divide between the students and teachers at Central. The generation of high school students think of torsos as normalized. We as a generation constantly see influencers wearing more "revealing" clothing that shows torsos and shoulders. Advertisements only show baby tees and crop tops. Generational perspectives of appropriateness are one reason students feel upset about being dress-coded. Teachers who are decades older grew up in a society that had a stricter idea about what one should look like when in a school environment. Some of these teachers have told females with a crop top on to put a jacket on during the heat advisory.

Within the survey, 20% of people surveyed responded that they had been dress-coded, and of these, 60% mentioned how uncomfortable they felt that a teacher was commenting on what they were wearing. In addition, many students mentioned how they were upset that Central began enforcing the dress code during a heat advisory. Central senior Marissa Wiese was dress-coded during the triple-digit weather and said, "[It] made me uncomfortable to think that me staying cool in such hot weather was considered to be inappropriate."

An alumnus, Nick Rock, my brother, said Central should enforce the dress coding of torsos. In work environments, there are dress codes in place that one must follow. He said, "We should be preparing students for what they will encounter in the future, and at the workplace, no one is able to walk around in short shorts and a crop top." He also questioned that if torsos are okay, wouldn't someone's chest be okay as well?

We as a generation have normalized torsos, chests are not normalized. While his perspective was interesting to hear, our student body is not learning in office buildings that have to abide by strict dress codes. Our students have the ability to express themselves with their choice of clothing.



CRIS BATAILLON | The Register

School year must retain summer break

Ethan Hughes
staff writer

Have you ever heard of year-round schooling?

Year-round schooling is an attempt to solve the lackluster mid-year breaks followed by a massive year-end break in the current system, which often causes burnout and lowers grades. In the year-round system, students get a two-week spring break, a four-week winter break, and a full week off for Thanksgiving, but the summer break is cut short.

So, why would a school want to switch to year-round schooling? There are a few reasons. For one, it's newer and more practical. Nothing else in the world runs like school, most notably jobs, and people will not be prepared to not have a summer break when they leave school. It can also help prevent student and teacher burnout. The theory is that more breaks equal less stress, and therefore less burnout.

I disagree.

For one, this is basically dodging the problem. Yes, you might have less burnout, but you're only getting that burnout because school starts incredibly early. Several studies, most notably one from the American Academy of Pediatrics, have shown that schools should start from 8:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. Central starts at 7:40 a.m., and instead of acknowledging that we are sending high schoolers to school one or two hours before advised, some schools are essentially choosing more breaks (but less summer) instead – clearly the wrong option.

But that's not the only problem. Additionally, this causes massive problems with scheduling for parents. For example, during the proposed spring break, parents of elementary students would have to set aside two whole weeks to ensure that their child is watched and cared for. This wouldn't be a problem for high school and even middle school students, but this will cause massive problems for the parents of elementary students. One could argue that we just don't

implement this schedule in primary schools, but this causes a problem. Kids grow up for six years with the same system, then it drastically changes in sixth grade where they lose a large part of the most anticipated break of the school year.

One could argue that summer vacation already has this problem inherently; as I mentioned earlier, jobs don't tend to feature a summer break. But parents are already used to that system. Most parents are already aware that when their children start school, they will not have school over the summer. Year-round schooling is far too new for it to not cause problems with scheduling because parents won't be used to it.

And lastly, it screws up several norms that are important for high schoolers. Summer jobs? Gone. Summer parties? Gone. Summer sports and summer camps? Gone. While much of the school system was not made with the kids themselves in mind, this schedule in particular just doesn't match these norms and expectations. A summer job is vital to becoming an adult because it gives students a taste of what it's like to work a full-time job. The year-round schedule robs students of that, and a lot of them can't even get a winter job to compensate. Winter jobs are far less common; odds say any winter job one might try to get will probably be taken.

But the true problem is that there's not a practical third option. Yes, four-day weeks exist, and they are proven to be beneficial to mental health, but they run into the same problem as a year-round school with parents' schedules. The only way a four-day school week can work is if it is city-wide and applies to jobs as well.

The choices consist of the current "bad system," the year-round schooling that screws with both elementary and high school students, and a system that would work perfectly if it were the norm – the four-day week. And no matter the intentions – that band-aid fix – the year-round school year is the worst option.

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Should coffee chains around the country push back the release of their fall drinks?

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The food industry in America is problematic.

Students must become civically involved

Charlie Yale
co-editor-in-chief

With the nation gearing up for the 2024 presidential election, many young people will have the opportunity to vote for the first time. This spring's high school graduates will get their first non-midterm or special election, and current seniors will get an opportunity to engage with the US government in new ways. In Nebraska, groups are working to put issues like school vouchers, medical marijuana, paid sick leave and abortion on the ballot for the voters to decide. Problems such as climate change and the national debt will continue to affect younger voters long after every current politician is out of office. This is why it is so essential that young people vote in 2024.

For much of the country's history, bad actors have intentionally tried to hinder the voting rights of young people, especially those coming from marginalized communities. The 26th Amendment was passed in 1971, recognizing 18-, 19- and 20-year-olds as full voting citizens. The 14th Amendment, which gave Black Americans the right to be citizens, did not translate to the right to vote. Polling booths/stations systematically turned Black people away, silencing their voices in the political process. And, of course, women were not granted the right to vote until 1920 with the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

Even today, however, politicians across the country are attempting to make it harder for people to vote.

Vivek Ramaswamy, a candidate seeking the Republican nomination for president, argued for raising the voting age to 25 for anyone who cannot pass a civics test. For Ramaswamy, the youngest candidate in the race for president, a knowledge of civics is important for young Americans to get involved in government. Those who oppose his policy cite that only a minority of American citizens would pass the test that Ramaswamy proposes, wiping out voting rights for most people aged 18-25.

Alabama is also in an ongoing fight with the federal government over gerrymandering; on Sept. 5, a panel of judges struck down Alabama's second attempt at redistricting, which the judges ruled violated the voting rights of Black Alabam-

ians. Voting rights are being systematically attacked across the country, and it will take the voices of young people to turn this trend around.

Now, more than ever, it is essential that young people are involved civically. Young people need to have their voices heard on the issues that will affect them for generations to come. But this must start with public high schools.

Public high schools have the unique opportunity to foster lifelong civic engagement. James Weinberg, a researcher, wrote in Springer Nature, an academic journal, that "research suggests that civic education may increase young people's social capital, political knowledge and even political participation." After a comprehensive study of English civics education, Weinberg suggested that "an open classroom climate that invokes social and political issues in daily learning may drive young people's expressive and electoral participation and close participatory inequalities." Through something as simple as relating political issues to subjects in class, students are able to understand politics on a much more intuitive level.

Civic engagement looks different for everyone. I'm someone who has always been interested in politics: I've helped students get registered to vote, I've worked for political campaigns and I engage with activities that deepen my understanding of policy issues. But something as simple as registering to vote can represent a much larger commitment to staying engaged and informed on political issues.

There are many barriers to being registered to vote, but registering to vote fulfills the civic duty that we all have as Americans. We have an obligation to contribute to the republic, and voting is one of many ways to do that.

So, for anyone who will be 18 by Nov. 5, 2024, listen up. The election to come has lots of contentious issues on the ballot that affect young people. Nebraska's legislature, which banned gender-affirming care and abortion last cycle (a ban that young people opposed), has 25 seats that will be on the ballot. Republican Don Bacon in Nebraska's 2nd congressional district faces Tony Vargas, a Democratic challenger. Deb Fischer, Nebraska's Republican Senate incumbent, also has her seat up for reelection. And, of course, President Joe Biden will face off against a Republican candidate in the presidential election. It is never too



Photo Courtesy of MARCO VERCH

early to start researching politicians, to understand their issues, to decide whom you will support, or to register to vote.

Now is the time to start shaping the future that you want to see for the United States.

IB classes should be open to all

Fiona Bryant
opinion editor

Quitting the International Baccalaureate (IB) program means accepting that taking IB core classes becomes impossible.

I knew that IB's "all or nothing" approach was not for me. Despite having planned on being an IB student since freshman year, a few days in IB classes made me reconsider whether a diploma was worth the unbalance of all-in academic rigor. I still wanted to take some IB classes. Yet, as I sat down to revise my schedule, IB core classes that I was academically ready for had one restriction: the student "must be pursuing an IB diploma."

Central's course catalog lists Honors-level and introductory classes as prerequisites to IB classes; I had taken these classes while in pre-IB. Yet, the simple fact that I would not be pursuing a diploma barred me from higher-level IB classes.

Central's IB classes should be open to all students.

For the 2023-24 school year, Social Cultural Anthropology SL is the only IB class open to students who are not pursuing the diploma. The other 26 IB classes being offered require a student to be in the IB program, according to Central's course catalog.

Completing the six to seven IB courses per year, plus the mandatory Extended Essay and Community, Activity, Service requirements, is a major time commitment. Requiring students to be enrolled in the entire diploma program limits the program to students with the time and absence of outside commitments. The Advanced Placement (AP) program, in contrast, allows students to take rigorous classes without committing to a whole sequence of courses. This point is mentioned in Jane McGill's article about the Honors gap at Central; allowing IB classes to be taken without the pressure of a diploma could result in more people of color and economically disadvantaged students accessing IB-level classes; 60.4% of IB students are white, and 83% are not economically disadvantaged, as cited in McGill's article.

Non-IB students having access to IB classes is nothing new. Another IB school in Nebraska, Millard North High School, offers IB classes

to non-diploma seekers. Even with a program reportedly boasting over 90 diploma candidates in 2022, Millard North has still managed to share the resources of IB with other students.

Limiting IB also stands against the principles of the IB program itself. The IB program's diversity, equity and inclusion statement declares, "we will explore new ways to open our programmes and our work to new languages, cultures and contexts." Central's IB program needs to open its classes to meet the context of each interested student. Not every student is in a place to devote their junior and senior years to the diploma program.

Similarly, Central prides itself on being one of three IB schools in the state. However, access to those IB classes is extremely limited in its current form. All students should be allowed to participate in the academics that Central is so proud of.

Logistics are said to be a challenge to opening up IB classes. Part of IB's appeal is the smaller class sizes entirely focused on completing the IB tests and extracurricular parts of the diploma. A class with students who do not need to be taught to the test arguably may disrupt the class structure. However, students enrolling in an IB class will be aware of the diploma-driven flow of the material. IB also aims to develop "the whole person" who is "able to engage with people in an increasingly globalized, rapidly changing world," as described by IB. The isolation of IB classes places diploma-seekers in a bubble that arguably contrasts with IB's principles. Including outside perspectives in IB classes would be a strength.

There is no reason to exclude core IB courses from students who choose not to pursue a diploma. Classes besides Social Cultural Anthropology and Theory of Knowledge need to be open to juniors and seniors who are academically suited for challenging classes. Attitudes surrounding the exclusive nature of IB will also need to be repaired, and students will need to be aware that IB is open to them. Until this happens, IB will only be teaching inclusion in theory.

Seasonal drinks require delay

Katie Besancon
staff writer

Should coffee chains around the country push back the release of their fall drinks? Coffee chains like Starbucks release specialty fall drinks such as pumpkin spice lattes, pumpkin cream cold brew, pumpkin cream chai lattes and apple crisp oatmeal macchiatos. They are also releasing baked items like baked apple croissants, pumpkin cream cheese muffins and a pumpkin and pepita loaf.

Other chains, like Dunkin', offer signature pumpkin spice lattes and their nutty pumpkin coffee. Dunkin' is also releasing baked items, such as pumpkin cake donuts and pumpkin donut holes, along with pumpkin muffins. Dunkin', unlike most other coffee chains, releases savory fall items such as maple sugar bacon and a breakfast sandwich.

Scooters is following the same boat as these other chains with the pumpkin spice lattes and pumpkin cold foam. Scooters set themselves apart from other chains with their baked items, including pumpkin spice cake bites, pumpkin muffins and a maple waffle sandwich.

These coffee chains release their fall drinks between Aug. 16 and Aug. 24. It is too early to have these drinks released. The official first day of fall is Sept. 23, yet the fall drink release across these major chains started a month and a half before the official fall season.

Not only this, but it never really feels like fall in August; it is still extremely hot across the country, especially this year when the temperature was often over 100 degrees during this time.

The temperatures never drop until the end of September to the beginning of October, thus another reason chains should push the release back. When chains release these pumpkin drinks while it feels like 100 degrees, it is not something people necessarily want to order.

These drinks are supposed to enhance the fall time, when everyone is going to apple orchards, picking pumpkins and going to get a drink that is only released for a limited time. Many people go to get their drinks now, even when many of the fall activities that everyone knows about are not yet open. Instead, coffee shops should wait until our favorite fall activities start to open before releasing the seasonal drinks. That way, when going to your favorite fall activity, you can do it with a fall drink in your hand.

While coffee chains would not have these products released for as long, that would increase the anticipation for customers. This would create a rush in people wanting their fall drinks, boosting business sales when it comes to the pumpkin spice seasonal flavor.

Coffee chains should push back the release of their fall drinks until the official start of fall in late September.



CRIS BATAILLON | The Register

Modern technology causes attachment issues

Ella Levy
co-editor-in-chief

I have an anxious attachment to my phone. Every night, I fall asleep to a podcast playing on my phone. My phone always has little battery left at the end of the day. So, when I am going to bed, there's a high chance it is below 20%. Even though I know I should charge it overnight. Even though the charger is just on the other side of my nightstand, I choose not to because I need it with me.

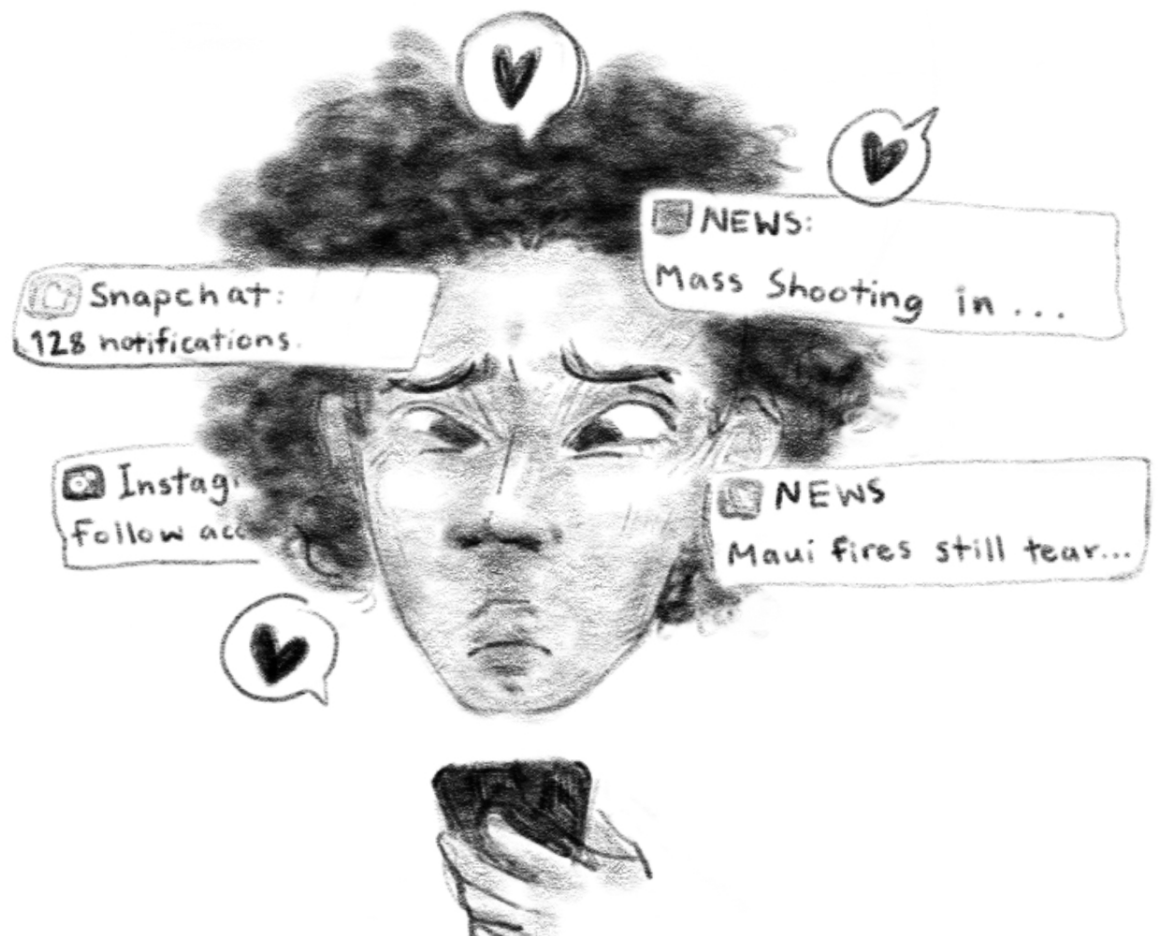
I am completely focused during class, but I have my phone on my desk. I just like the option to be there. Sometimes I need that escape. I like the temptation, and I also like to give in to it. I have no problem staying off my phone in class as long as I have it with me. But the second it's somewhere else, I start to wonder if someone needs me or if there's something I'm forgetting that's on my phone.

I am a very organized person, and so is my phone. It has every one of my lists, schedules and reminders. My phone helps me to stay organized and helps me remember the things I may forget. I check my phone often to make sure I'm not forgetting to do something. So, if I do not have my phone, I start to worry there's something I'm missing.

My phone is my partner. It acts almost as a member of my family. I am anxiously attached to it.

But why? Why am I attached to a rectangle with a screen? Is it because it allows me to contact someone if I need help? Because it tells me what to do? For me, it's the feeling it provides me: a feeling of safety and security. My phone is always there; it's a constant in my world of chaos. It's something I can always count on to stay the same.

I need my phone to be there for me. It replaces some fear I have. I turn to it when I feel alone. My phone never argues or disagrees with me. My phone never gives me an opinion I did not ask for, or advice I do not want, but simply information. A quick search on my phone provides me with all the information I need to fix the problem myself.



My phone is a distraction. It transports me to new places. It takes me out of this world and puts me in a new one, a better one. One that is without homework and rude people. One where I can simply exist and do not have to think.

CRIS BATAILLON | The Register

I think every person with a phone is attached to it. When something becomes so prominent in our everyday routine, and we depend on it for so many things, how could we not form an attachment?

Launch Leadership Camp changed my life. It could change yours, too.

Grace Sunseri
staff writer

Whenever I tell my friends I'm going to Launch Leadership Camp, their first reaction is to call it boring. They are confused why I would leave them for a week to go an hour away and spend my time with strangers. And whenever someone hears "leadership camp," they assume it's some boring nerd camp.

But for anyone who has attended Launch, a program that develops leadership skills through teambuilding exercises, competitions and exposure to situations that require problem-solving, it is the best week of their summer.

When I first attended, I felt the same way. I was an insecure, awkward 11-year-old who didn't like talking to new people and just wanted to go home. I eventually opened up to my group and really enjoyed myself. We even cried together on the last day, something that's held true to this year. Now, as a four-year veteran, my mom practically has to drag me away from Doane University.

Launch was the first place I had almost full independence. I have gone to both Wayne State University and Doane with Launch. On the campuses, you are given a dorm that is yours and a roommate for the week. You are in charge of getting yourself up and ready for the day.

Launch divides all delegates, or "dellies", into groups of 10-13. The people you are grouped with are in your age group and can be from anywhere in the country. Over five days at Launch, you will build life-long connections with the other people in your group.

During the week, we participate in many different activities. There are co-op-only tasks, things you will do with a couple of other co-op groups, and whole-group festivities.

In co-op, you will mostly do things tied to a deeper meaning, like working in groups, social awareness, and overall being a stronger leader. One of the most challenging activities from this summer was called "Uniperson." We were split into groups of two or three and had our wrists and ankles tied to another person's. We then had to complete a couple of activities in this state, like walking down the hall to get a drink from the water fountain and making a paper airplane. The activity didn't end until we got to lunch, so my group of three had to walk down a flight of stairs and walk a few hundred feet to the cafeteria. This was very challenging and got extremely frustrating at many points, but the goal of this was to teach us compromise and communication.

There are also a few activities with all the other dellies in your age group. These are also tied to a deeper meaning. The most compelling activity of the week was called "The Color Purple." Before lunch, we were all given a colored square of construction paper. This color ultimately corresponded to a

social class. Orange was homeless people, green was lower class, blue was upper middle class and purple was royalty. Immediately upon entering the hall, oranges were instructed to stand along the walls in the entrance area. On the other hand, purples were applauded and escorted right to a lunch table. A prison was started, and there was almost a riot in the prison. This gave us a slightly exaggerated but compelling view of how the world can feel. This gave me a point of view I've never had and was very compelling to see how others in our society can be treated.

The activities that include everyone are the most fun, though. The Olympics is the most hype night of the week. During the Olympics, you compete in co-ops and participate in several small tasks and activities, like throwing ping-pong balls into an egg carton or trying to keep feathers up in the air using your breath. You find out the results on the Banquet night. For this, everyone gets dressed up and takes pictures, and we get to eat catered food. Then, there is a ceremony dedicated to awards. My co-op placed second at the Olympics. There is also a dance after the banquet, which has a very homecoming-like feel.

On the last night of Launch, we do a fire ceremony that is a visualization of "spreading the fire" of what we learned during Launch into our everyday lives. My most recent co-op got incredibly close during the week. By the end of the last night, we were all crying while sharing stories from the past few days. We were also able to do very intimate one-on-ones where you could explain directly to someone how they impacted you throughout the week.

It sounds corny, but I don't know who I'd be without Launch. I grew into myself as a person there. I not only learned about identity and morals but evaluated those things in later years. I was an extreme introvert for the majority of my life. I now consider myself an extrovert and have Launch to thank for that. Five days of forced social interaction will do that to a person.

I cannot recommend Launch enough to my peers. Even if you aren't a super social person, you will get more and more comfortable talking to your co-op and are guaranteed to have an amazing time. Registration for Launch is in January, so set your reminders and get ready for the best week of your summer!



Photo Courtesy of MISS AMAZING INC.

American cuisine pales in comparison with world fare

Arisa Lattison
arts & culture editor

The food industry in America is problematic. Over the summer this year, I spent six weeks out of the country. It was amazing: beautiful scenery, amiable people and – most importantly – the food was absolutely divine. Not only was it rejuvenating, but I felt fuller, although I was eating less. I never watched my portion sizes, but I didn't binge; it just always felt like enough.

The most apparent sign of this was my weight loss. I lost almost seven pounds in the course of one and a half months, and it never felt like I was cutting back on the amount I was eating. When I got back, I returned to my old habits. I would snack more frequently, eat bigger meals, and generally consume more daily. I think the problem lies in the American food industry. Maximized for profits, not only is it expensive, but significantly lower grade than food I've had elsewhere.

A lot of America's food is processed. According to Northeastern University's Network Science Institute, processed food makes up 73% of the food supply. This is extremely high compared to the average of 25% in Europe. The fast, cheap way of making food reduces the quality of it all and is linked to diabetes, obesity, cancer and other health problems.

Owen Fuesel, a junior who has traveled to Turkey and Greece, among other places in Europe and Asia, also believes there is a significant difference in the grade of food between those countries and the USA.

"Especially in Turkey, a lot of the food has a lack of processing, and it's just a lot more fresh," he said. "Say somebody moved from Istanbul to Omaha ... they would probably be shocked by the fact that we can, or not that we can, but we do, throw a bag of some frozen food in our freezer and then just pull it out and heat it up anytime we want. That's very different from what they do."

Another junior student, Hugh Lowe-Weyand, has been to Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria and other places in Europe. He also mentioned the general freshness as well as good quality food items being available without having to go to high-end restaurants.

"I bought a box of strawberries off some random store in Germany, and they're the best strawberries I've ever had," Lowe-Weyand said. "They were just that much better than anything I've ever had in the U.S. That just any random street food is like holy."

This I can attest to. The last time I was in Europe was over five years ago, yet I still remember the Subway I had there. It looked fresh, it tasted fresh. That was my most memorable dish there just because I could compare it to the Subways I've had in the U.S. — it was so much bet-

ter over there!

Another pro is how balanced the meals are. Fuesel and senior Zoe Pinkelman touch on this idea. Pinkelman believes American food is mostly composed of carbohydrates. This is completely different from Japan, where she went during the summer for a school trip. Both emphasized how each meal was served with vegetables and different parts of the food groups. The consumption of good-quality nutrients also results in feeling fuller and more satisfied after every meal.

"After most meals, I was like completely full," Pinkelman said. "If I went out to eat in America, I would eat a meal and I would get full and then within a few hours I would be hungry again."

Contrary to popular belief, the portion sizes in Japan, among other places, aren't as small as many believe. A common misconception is that American portions are way bigger than those of other countries, but the students mentioned how other countries' portions were perfect, sometimes even a lot of food. This means America's portions aren't the problem; the problem is how food is made and the main goal of the industry — profit.

The intentions of the American food industry are to maximize profit, leading to the use of processed goods and lower-quality ingredients. According to Escoffier, a culinary school, our factories produce processed foods more efficiently than fresh food. They are often subsidized, while fruits and vegetables that are being minimally processed are not, and therefore expensive to purchase. Lowe-Weyand and Pinkelman also identified this as the issue.

"It's mostly just made to maximize the capitalization and how much money they can make," Lowe-Weyand said. "They don't care about long-term health; they don't care about how good it is for you. They just want to make as much food as they can and as much money as they can."

The people's well-being is the primary objective of Japan. Pinkelman had purchased a bowl of ramen there for less than 500 yen this summer, roughly \$3.41. That's so inexpensive, and we already addressed the fact that portions are not meager. She even had a hard time finishing the meal because of how hearty it was.

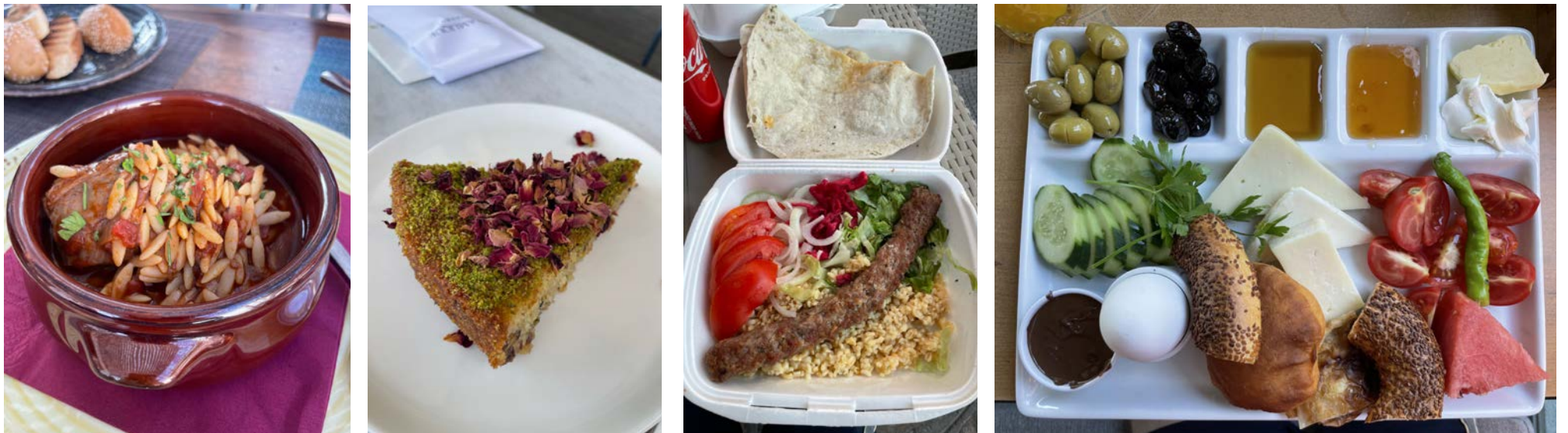
"They care more about being able to feed people than profits," she said.

Naturally, like how my brain still clings to the thought of Subway in Germany, these students found some of their own favorites to share in case readers have the opportunity to travel and try them out!

Fuesel's favorite dish was some "good old gyros" in Santorini. He had them not only there but also in the U.S., and they did not disappoint him in Greece.

Lowe-Weyand enjoyed his meal in Germany the most.

"It was just like bread and meat and tomatoes and lettuce ... it was something you could find here in the U.S., but it was just in Germany, so it's better."



From left to right: Giouvetsi eaten in Santorini, Greece; Persian love cake eaten in Istanbul, Turkey; Kebab eaten in Bodrum, Turkey; typical Turkish breakfast eaten in Izmir, Turkey.

Photo Courtesy of OWEN FUESEL

Central has history of defending public education

Jane McGill
executive editor

When Omaha High School opened its doors to students on Nov. 10, 1859, it became one of the first schools in the territory of Nebraska not to charge them for their education. One month later, the school's pupils established the first student newspaper in Nebraska to keep it that way.

The Free School Advocate made its first appearance on Dec. 21, 1859, in the school that would later become Central. At the time, Omaha was a wayward settlement of around 4,000 people on the far edge of the rapidly expanding United States.

The territorial legislature had authorized the taxation of local mills to raise the funds needed to establish a public school system in Nebraska four years earlier. Prior to the law, American and European settlers in the region had to pay tuition for their children to attend a private or "subscription" school. Many of these schools only offered primary grades, not high school, and their cost ensured that poor children received no schooling at all.

Even as it welcomed its first students, the future of Omaha High School was unclear. The tax money used to fund the school, collected at a time when most settlers were struggling financially from the Panic of 1857, had already been stretched thin. Amid uncertainty about whether it could stay open without charging tuition, the students began to document the school's educational methods and academic achievements in their newspaper.

The Advocate published news, editorials, poetry and creative writing, all the work of students at the high school. Since they could not afford to have the paper printed, only one copy of each issue was produced, handwritten in fine script by student editors. Each issue was read aloud before the study body at school assemblies at 3 p.m. each Wednesday. The Advocate was far more visually appealing than other student newspapers of the era. Over its short lifespan, the paper's covers, often decorated with illustrations and calligraphy, became increasingly elaborate.

It is believed to have ceased publication sometime in 1860. The surviving issues of the paper are in the collection of The Nebraska State Historical Society. Today, The Free School Advocate is an artifact of Central's humble beginnings as a two-story red brick schoolhouse in a budding settlement on the American frontier.

Yet, when its tattered old issues are read closely, the paper's words have strangely gained a new relevance. The Omaha High School was a rare exception in a time when most settlers in Nebraska had to pay for schooling or not learn at all. The students who founded the paper could not take free public schools for granted, so they had to use journalism to fight for their right to be educated.

While our circumstances have changed, Central students once again find themselves living through a perilous moment for Nebraska public schools. In April, the state legislature passed

a law making public funds available to private schools for the first time. Omaha Public Schools estimates that its general budget will be reduced because of the legislature's changes to school funding at a time in which the district is experiencing a historic teacher shortage.

At the same time, public schools across the state are being confronted by a growing backlash from right-wing activists claiming, without evidence, that teachers are indoctrinating students. In these troubled times, the motto of The Free School Advocate (1859) reminds us why public education is an institution worth defending:

Our glorious motto, bear it on,
o'er mountains, plain and sea;

For every daughter, every son
Our public schools are free

Nebraska teems with wealth untold,
Yet her proudest boast shall be,
be,

Not that her mountains are rich in gold
But that her schools are free

Pages of The Past is a column exploring the history of scholastic journalism at Central High School



The cover of the April 1860 issue of The Free School Advocate featuring the newspaper's motto.

Photo Courtesy of History Nebraska

arts & culture

THE REGISTER

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'BOTTOMS': ICONIC TEEN COMEDY



"We're punching each other, adrenaline is flowing — next thing you know, Isabel and Brittany are kissing us on the mouths!" -PJ, played by Rachel Sennott
Photo Courtesy of Orion Pictures

Hadley Forsen-Yepes
chief copy editor

The teen comedy genre is memorable for its glamorized and questionable portrayal of American high school. It often features your typical jocks, cheerleaders and nerds. The main character usually starts as an underdog but gradually moves up the social ladder and must grapple with their newfound popularity.

While this is true of PJ (Rachel Sennott) and Josie (Ayo Edebiri) in "Bottoms," what sets them apart from other teen comedy main characters is that they are underdogs because they are "gay, untalented and ugly." Their key to climbing up the social ladder is starting a girl's fight club, and their motive for doing so is to hook up with cheerleaders.

"Bottoms" co-writer/director Emma Seligman and co-writer/co-star Sennott have given us a movie that, yes, features many common teen comedy tropes but with a queer and campy twist.

Sennott and Edebiri, who attended New York University together and have been creative partners ever since, form a powerful duo as lesbian best friends PJ and Josie. The former is an overconfident firecracker, and the latter is quiet with quick wit. Their joint awkwardness is amplified when they are in the presence of their cheerleader crushes Brittany (Kaia Gerber) and Isabel (Havana Rose Liu). To make matters worse, Isabel is dating Rockbridge Falls High School's golden boy, Jeff (Nicholas Galitzine).

If football is Rockbridge's religion, team captain Jeff is its god. This is why, when Josie gently runs into Jeff's knee with her car, the school principal is convinced that Josie and PJ may have jeopardized the school's chances of defeating their rivals in the homecoming football game. With the threat of expulsion hanging over their heads, the girls take the not-so-obvious course of action: convince the principal that Jeff just

got caught in the crosshairs of their girl's self-defense club.

Now obligated to form a club, find a sponsor and recruit members, Josie and PJ unintentionally create a tight-knit community of girls who bond over beating each other up. The club leaders, however, are oblivious to the safe space they have fostered and are more concerned with the excuse it has given them to get up close and personal with their crushes.

"We build a community. We bond, we share, we connect. We're punching each other; adrenaline is flowing — next thing you know, Isabel and Brittany are kissing us on the mouths!" Said fight club co-founder PJ.

The flick is jam-packed with jokes that hit close to home with Gen Z and anyone who has ever identified as an embarrassing, queer high schooler. Sennott and Edebiri's real-life friendship, coupled with their improvisational talents, make it impossible not to belly laugh at PJ and Josie's banter. In terms of "Superbad" characters, PJ would be Seth (Jonah Hill), Josie would be Evan (Michael Cera), and side character/amateur bomb-maker Hazel (Ruby Cruz) would be McLovin.

Where the film lacks comedic punches in the third act, it makes up for it with physical ones. The stakes become a lot higher toward the end of the movie, and the fight club must put their skills to the test in a brutal, bloody battle scene.

"Bottoms" is buzzing with electricity, and not just thanks to the energy of its cast but also its vibrant color palette and soundtrack. Helmed by pop star Charli XCX, the score's upbeat electric guitars and synthesizers infuse the movie with a liveliness that makes it undeniably fun.

Like other movies of its genre, the antagonists of "Bottoms" are the football players. But where the film strays from the normal is that instead of making Jeff and his athletic entourage hyper-masculine manly-men, writers Seligman and Sennott made them drama queens. Jeff is not scary because he is tough; he is scary because he is stupid and oblivious to all his wrongdoings. Jeff represents all the straight, white men

who are handed everything on a silver platter. Meanwhile, Josie, PJ and the girls of Rockbridge quite literally must fight to get their voices heard.

On the surface, "Bottoms" is a light-hearted satirical comedy, but underneath, it is a brilliant social commentary that demonstrates the hardships faced by women — especially queer women and queer women of color, and the importance of female unity and self-empowerment. In the end, we get a sapphic romance that, refreshingly, does not end in tragedy.

The familiarity is what draws you in, but it's the over-the-top quirkiness that makes you stay. This is why "Bottoms" deserves cult classic status and why everyone should participate in its campy ridiculousness once it hits streaming services.

How 'Spider-Verse' changed animation forever p. 13

The effect "Into the Spider-Verse" had on the animated film industry is monumental and has resulted in a plethora of recent animated masterpieces that provide a fresh taste in film.

Damon Albarn's most recent musical release, Blur's "The Ballad of Darren," tops previous and more prominent project "Cracker Island" p. 13

In late July, Blur released their ninth studio album, "The Ballad of Darren" (their first in eight years). At the end of February, another musical product created and fronted by Damon Albarn, the Gorillaz, released their eighth album, "Cracker Island."

Do Hadley Forsen-Yepes' crossword! p. 14

"No Hard Feelings": The only resentment you'll have is not watching it sooner p. 15

When scrolling through TikTok a couple of weeks ago, a short clip from Gene Stupnitsky's "No Hard Feelings" popped up on my For You Page. It was one of a woman who seemed to be "kidnapping" a teenage boy from his workplace. The boy, under the stipulation that this was indeed what was happening, whips out Mace and sprays her. This interested me in the film as, over the course of the past week, I'd continue to encounter scenes from the movie.

How 'Spider-Verse' changed animation forever

Brayden Simpson
staff writer

Cinema is back. The summer of 2023 was filled with explosive box office weekends and a string of critically and financially successful blockbusters. With all the excitement surrounding late-summer releases, and especially the worldwide phenomenon that was "Barbenheimer," I would have forgotten about June's "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse" – if it wasn't one of the greatest films I have ever seen. The existence of such a stellar animated movie, as well as many others, is owed largely to the resurgence of creative animation following the film's counterpart, "Into the Spider-Verse."

"Across the Spider-Verse" is one of the latest in a series of stellar animated movies following the release of its predecessor, 2018's "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse." Such films usually employ an explosive and vibrant art style formerly atypical to the genre. This style prioritizes stylization over realism, the use of different media, such as live action elements and different animation tools within the same film, and contrasting art styles as a storytelling method. Many also blur the line between 2D and 3D animation.

Movie fans have pointed out these similarities apparent in several movies that began production after the success of "Into the Spider-Verse", tracing these characteristics back to its release. When "Spider-Verse" first came out, it was in a class by itself in terms of visual style. The animation was so markedly different from other films at the time. Disney's "Ralph Breaks the Internet" and Illumination's "The Grinch" came out just a month before "Spider-Verse" and continued their studios' respective animation styles. Perfect, rounded characters in bright environments were the status quo.

"Into the Spider-Verse" avoided these styles entirely, favoring a nearly 2D style reminiscent of cel shading, a type of rendering which makes 3D models look flat, giving the film a comic book aesthetic. The animators took this a step further by adding sketch lines and Ben-Day dots for detailing characters.

This change in animation was refreshing in a market so oversaturated with movies that looked vaguely the same, and gave other animators hope that they could be just as creative in their future projects. After the financial success of the film, it was clear that experimenting with visual style was filling seats, and thus began an animation renaissance.

Since 2021, several movies have been released that feature a visual style not unlike "Into the Spider-Verse." These films include the likes of "The Mitchells vs. the Machines" (2021), "The Bad Guys" (2022), "Enter Galactic" (2022), "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish" (2022), and "Nimona" (2023). All were well-received by audiences and critics alike, with even the lower-rated films, such as Dreamworks's "The Bad Guys" receiving a 3.4 overall star rating from movie fans on Letterboxd. "Puss in Boots" in particular took the world by storm, triumphing over its predecessor at the box office and receiving praise for its painter-like style. Director Joel Crawford credited some of this creative success to "Into the Spider-Verse" in an interview with SFX Magazine, citing it as the shift away from the quest for realism. "I think 'Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse' opened up the mainstream

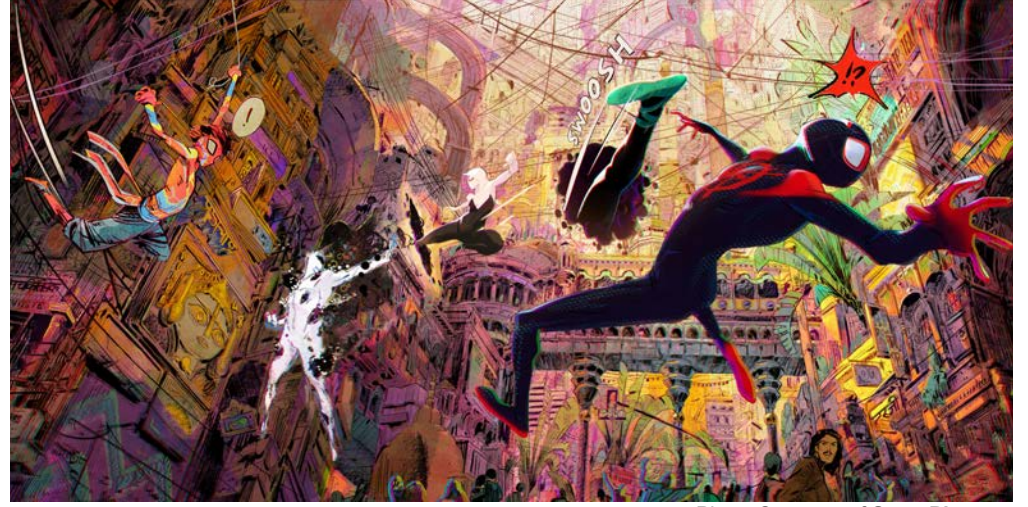


Photo Courtesy of Sony Pictures

animation industry to realize that audiences don't just want a CG movie that looks totally like CG," Crawford explained.

This shift continued with "Across the Spider-Verse," which expanded on the original's signature flair by introducing contrasting animation styles for individual characters, some of which even move on different frames. With "Into the Spider-Verse," the animators at Sony mastered their craft to create a sequel artistically superior to even their earlier work on "Into the Spider-Verse." Their labor was well-rewarded when the film opened to \$120.5 million in its opening weekend, going onto gross around \$270 million more, surpassing the first film entirely.

Another of the summer's Spider-Verse-esque films is Seth Rogen-produced "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem," and it is clear to see the effect Sony's influence has had. The sketch-style animation introduced in "Into the Spider-Verse" is turned up to the max for "Ninja Turtles," in which the entire world and each of its characters appear to be drawn with pen or marker, their features notably imperfect. It's a far cry from the clean, rubbery style of most modern animation, and moviegoers seem to love it. The film opened to a 97% critics score and 90% audience score on Rotten Tomatoes, with a 3.8-star average rating on Letterboxd as of late August.

And even in the halls of Central, the effect of these movies is felt. Many high school students are just as enamored with these films as movie connoisseurs and animators, it seems.

"The fact that ["Into the Spider-Verse"] put a style so inspired by the comics above anything else made it so revolutionary," explained Central senior and aspiring filmmaker Jaden Cheloha. "These little things you don't expect out of animation, these animators took advantage of."

"I'm so glad that other movies have taken inspiration from 'Spider-Verse'...", he said. "Studios will continue to utilize and push the medium, and we have 'Into the Spider-Verse' to thank for that."

'The Ballad of Darren' tops Albar's previous project

Haylon Sipe
staff writer

One of the most popular musical acts of the 2000s has been the fictional group known as the Gorillaz. The group has been critically acclaimed for their entire tenure; the unique nature of their presentation and the experimental style of their music leaves them standing out among modern popular music acts. The animated band is presented as a conventional group of four, but in reality, the Gorillaz is a musical project created by one man—Damon Albarn.

Albarn is most known outside of his work on the Gorillaz for being the frontman of the band Blur, which gained popularity in the mid-'90s. Since the beginning of the Gorillaz, he has been part of both projects. Despite similarities between the two, many do not know that Albarn is responsible for both, and the Gorillaz remains a much more recognizable name. At the time of writing, the Gorillaz get about 22 million streams on Spotify monthly, while Blur gets 11 million.

In 2023, both bands released new albums: "The Ballad of Darren" by Blur on July 21 and "Cracker Island" by Gorillaz on Feb. 24. For the first time in their history, Blur took a similar tone and style to the Gorillaz, and surprisingly, may have made music that makes for a better listening experience for Gorillaz fans.

To explain why "The Ballad of Darren" is the better album, "Cracker Island" must first be analyzed. The theme presented is grand, as usual for the band. The tracks focus on the culture that America has created through the entertainment industry, relating it to a cult and pointing out discrepancies in equal treatment among individuals in entertainment. The ideas track with past themes in Gorillaz's music, and the criticism of the idealistic consensus of

how the industry operates is the best part of the album. The delivery of the theme on "Cracker Island" is what makes it stand out, though. The album could be the least genuine project has sounded.

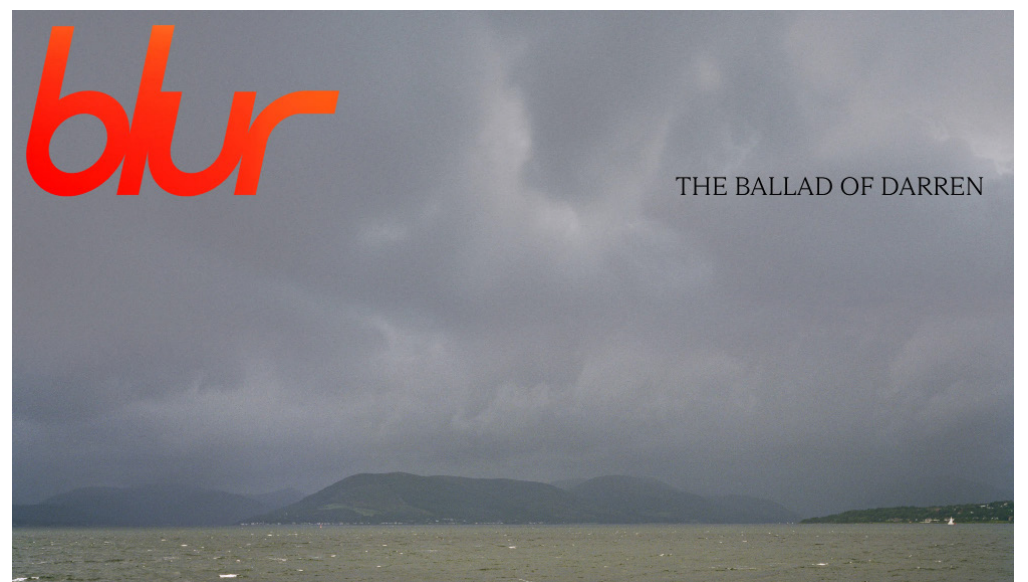
One of the best parts of the Gorillaz is that their music pushes boundaries. It's unique and is different enough between albums that each one is an entirely different experience. Every time they release music, they create something completely new. It doesn't sound like an attempt to imitate previous albums. One album will be completely made up of a conventional rock style, and another will be almost entirely rap features.

"Cracker Island's" most significant flaw is that this does not seem to be the case.

Instead of coming together and trying to make a unique album, it sounds like they just tried to make a Gorillaz album. The Gorillaz have released four albums in six years, and a lot of the music between these albums is indiscernible. All four albums take on an increasingly less impactful version of a pop style that was a small part of one bigger vision in their earlier works. Instead of expanding upon new ideas, they resorted to the same idea. It feels as though it's meant to be marketable instead of feeling sincere.

The problem with "Cracker Island" isn't that it doesn't sound good; there actually isn't anything terribly wrong with the songs. A consumer could listen to "Cracker Island" and come to the conclusion that Albarn may never lose his touch when it comes to producing music. The problem is that among the rest of his catalog, the album is boring and nowhere near innovative.

Because of this, no matter how good



the music is, it defeats the purpose of the Gorillaz. As one single musical experience, "Cracker Island" is low quality. While it makes sense for plenty of artists to stick to one style throughout their career, staying within boundaries ruins the Gorillaz. Despite the individual tracks being well made, "Cracker Island" is worth skipping since most will have heard similar music from the Gorillaz before.

"The Ballad of Darren" is very unlike most other Blur albums, specifically when compared to their earlier material that casual listeners will be more aware of. Like the Gorillaz album, what the lyrics mean is a massive highlight of the album. The songs take place from the point of view of a man who puts himself through unfortunate situations but refuses to admit responsibility. Albarn adapts Blur to better fit his unique storytelling, which takes advantage of skills more often seen utilized on Gorillaz.

The reason why "The Ballad of Darren" may be a better listening experience for a Gorillaz fan isn't just the quality of the storytelling. The tone of the music is more like how "Cracker Island" should have been.

The usual excitement and speed of Blur's music is put through a modern filter. Albarn's voice is floaty, sometimes coming across as more of a speaking voice than anything else.

It feels like someone is confiding in you rather than singing a song. The instrumental never strays too far from its base, and the songs keep an authentic form built on acoustics and backed up by a soft synthesizer.

Some of the best songs on the album are "The Narcissist" and "Goodbye Albert." These songs play back-to-back and are the best examples of what makes the album special. There's definitely part of the style of the songs that hint at the experience of the band, but there is no question that it is music released in 2023. The mood set recognizes what is expected of new music. It doesn't feel like music made to sell; it feels like music that embraces what it is without trying to be something else. The laid-back presentation of these songs is perfect for listening both casually and mindfully.

If someone searching for new music is looking for something that they've never heard before, they're more likely to find it here than on "Cracker Island."

Albarn took a risk in changing the tone of a band not known for making music that is far out of the ordinary. By embracing more of a modern sound and changing Blur's usual style, he created an album that works far more in his audience's favor.

Books by Central alumni we recommend

Ethan Hughes
staff writer

People write books. More specifically, several Central alumni have gone on to write books. But how many, exactly? 20? 30? 60?

Over 100.

In these “over 100” books, there is a massive range – from nonfiction and historical fiction to textbooks and children’s novels. This massive range means that there’s almost definitely a book in the catalog that you might be interested in. Here are 10.

1. “My Dog Ate It” by Saragail K. Benjamin – In this children’s novel, Benjamin tells the story of Danny, a fifth grader who decides that if he never does his homework, he can stay a fifth grader forever. However, using her “floating talking dog” named Homework, his teacher plans to get him back on track.

2. “Unbeatable: Tom Osborne and the Greatest Era of Nebraska Football” by Henry J. Cordes – This nonfiction book tries to cover everything that happened when famed football player and coach Tom Osborne became the Huskers coach in 1972 and while he led them up until 1997. This book has a comprehensive account of information, including comprehensive descriptions of the 1995 national title game and the lives/careers of Lawrence Phillips and Tommie Frazier.

3. “Spots Before Your Eyes” by Jane Goodall – Written by Jane Goodall with contributions from Howard Buffett and Ann van Dyke, this book on African cheetahs explains not only their lives but their impacts on humans and how humans are impacting this endangered species. It talks about everything from cheetah hierarchy to the loss of life and habitat for the world’s fastest mammal.

4. “The Bitter Pill: Doctors, Patients, and Failed Expectation” by Martin R. Lipp, M.D. – Written in 1982, Doctor Lipp, a psychiatrist, shows how the ethical struggles of the medical industry look from the perspective of the doctors and how he uses psychiatry with general medicine to care for patients. The overarching theme of the book is the idea that “the patient loses, and the doctor wins” is false. Lipp uses his book to try to push this idea.

5. “Back Tracks: The Saga of Josh and Little Bird” by Arthur M. Hagberg – After his brother didn’t return from a trip, Josh goes on his own journey at just 18. After meeting the “love of his life,” Little Bird, the story describes his meetings with hostile Native Americans, the wilderness, and his founding of the first school on the Yellowstone River in the 1880s.

6. “Caleb Reynolds: American Seafarer” by Emily Baker Reynolds – Written by a descendant of Captain Caleb Reynolds, Emily Baker Reynolds used century-and-a-half-year-old logs, letters, and a large amount of poetry to tell the true story

of her ancestor. It covers his journey to what is now British Columbia and takes place just after the Revolutionary War during an oft-overlooked period of history.

7. “Forty Chances: Finding Hope in a Hungry World” by Howard G. Buffett – Written by the son of billionaire Warren Buffett, the premise is, to summarize: if you had \$3 billion and 40 years, what would you do? In 40 stories, Buffett recounts his struggles to fight domestic poverty and world hunger in his purely nonfiction book.

8. “Out Takes In the Galaxies” by Gaye Follmer – Reportedly, this fiction book took 40 years to write. Rather than being a standard story, the book is divided into several short stories. Throughout these short stories and a novella also in the book, there is an underlying theme of not just surviving in struggling times, but thriving in them.

9. “Žižka, The One-Eyed” by Jim Fuxa – Set in the late 1300s in Czechia, this historical fiction novel tells the story of the life of Jan Žižka, a famed military general who becomes the leader of a revolution and falls in love with a widowed queen while dealing with a severe injury – the loss of his eye.

10. “The Bones of Paradise” by Jonis Agee – A historical fiction novel set in the years following the Wounded Knee massacre in the Nebraska Sandhills, this multigenerational story covers mystery and tragedy the while representing the family’s deep connection to the land.

‘No Hard Feelings’: The only resentment is not watching sooner

Arisa Lattison
arts & culture editor

When scrolling through TikTok a couple of weeks ago, a short clip from Gene Stupnitsky’s “No Hard Feelings” popped up on my For You Page. It was one of a woman who seemed to be “kidnapping” a teenage boy from his workplace. The boy, under the stipulation that this was indeed what was happening, whips out Mace and sprays her. This interested me in the film as, over the course of the past week, I’d continue to encounter scenes from the movie.

After I finally gave in and sat down to watch it, I couldn’t get enough.

The movie opens with Maddie Barker (Jennifer Lawrence), a 32-year-old woman, getting her car repossessed. Working two jobs as a bartender and an Uber driver, Maddie needs her car to make enough money to keep her house. Later, browsing Craigslist with her friend, she finds an ad listing posted by wealthy helicopter parents for a Buick Regal in exchange for “dating” their son, Percy Becker (Andrew Barth Feldman).

She applies for the position, and what started as a plan to acquire a car soon becomes a journey of coming-of-age and character development for the two of them. With parents that “hover” overhead, Percy is never fully able to be independent, while Maddie refuses to

establish that path for herself, stuck in a past she doesn’t want to let go of. They help each other by leading one another to realize not just how to live their lives, but to shape lives of true fulfillment.

Apart from the plot itself, the director, Stupnitsky, and the actors themselves made this movie a worthwhile 103 minutes. In addition to Lawrence and Feldman, Laura Benanti (Allison Becker), Matthew Broderick (Laird Becker), Natalie Morales (Sarah) and Ebon Moss-Bachrach (Gary) played significant roles in the teenage rom-com. A notable mention is Omaha Central graduate Zahn McClarnon (Gabe Sawyer). McClarnon, who plays a small role as a lawyer in the movie, graduated in the class of 1986. It was a pleasant highlight, recognizing one of the people to be from my very own high school.

Stupnitsky also does an incredible job of setting the atmosphere of the film, and the actors fit the roles they’re playing perfectly.

The actors did a phenomenal job of bringing their characters to life and making them seem like your average, everyday people. Lawrence plays a role within a role – a woman pretending to come into Percy’s life as a coincidence. The way she executes the terrible, over-the-top flirting and layered personality of her character is commendable. Feldman embodies the awkward, socially inept nature of Percy and still man-

ages to convey it even as he matures.

Some things I disliked were the speed at which the film progressed, as well as how out-of-place certain intimate scenes felt. To me, it seemed way too fast for the characters to get to know each other so much in so little time, making the relationship of Maddie and Percy seem unreal. Percy also opens up to her unbelievably quickly for someone his parents described as “having a lot of trouble socially.” The time frame of the movie spans from June to early September, and yet the way they set it up makes it feel like mere days.

Additionally, there were multiple scenes in which the sentimental moments felt misplaced. Bouncing between laughing uncontrollably to heavy trauma-venting, the place-

ment just felt off. Aside from these two factors, it was an extremely enjoyable experience.

An R-rated rom-com that will have you on the floor, “No Hard Feelings” is a must-watch for those who love the funny moments amidst a heartwarming story. Though there were some aspects that could have been improved upon, the story overall, as well as the messages it conveyed, were some that may be relatable to people of all ages. It covers the present struggles of a sheltered teenager, an adult with a troubled past and the way they overcome each of their struggles with the help of each other’s perspectives. If you’re looking to smile and laugh until your cheeks hurt from sweet yet hilarious scenes, this movie is for you.



Photo Courtesy of Sony Pictures

Issue 1 Crossword

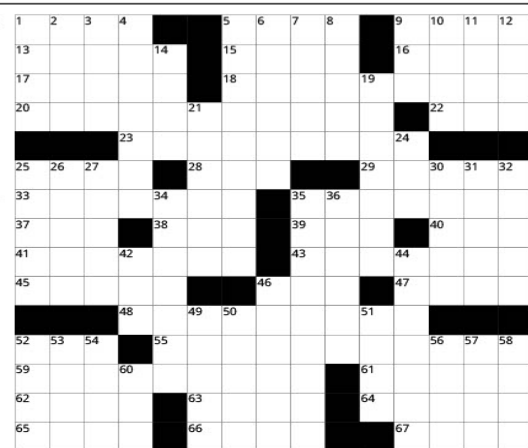
ACROSS

- 1 Suggestions, for short
- 5 Bird of prey
- 9 Bruins’ sch.
- 13 Community spirit
- 15 The end ___ era
- 16 Secular
- 17 Kind of bacterial infection
- 18 To audition
- 20 Jeans or slacks, say
- 22 Opposite of WSW
- 23 Device that measures gas properties
- 25 Volunteer’s words
- 28 Tribe native to Colorado
- 29 Overhang
- 33 Lasagna cheese
- 35 The “A” in LGBTQIA+
- 37 NYC subway
- 38 Verizon rival
- 39 GPS lines: Abbr.
- 40 Grammy winner Lipa
- 41 Drake’s zodiac sign
- 43 Most elegant
- 45 Vietnam’s capital
- 46 Tear
- 47 Bone: Prefix
- 48 Jackman’s “X-Men” role
- 52 Question of identity
- 55 Disney’s Rescue Rangers (an acorn-loving duo)

- 59 He has the most career RBIs
- 61 Totally fine
- 62 Sunburn soother
- 63 Pepper’s partner
- 64 Stockholm resident
- 65 Poetic daybreak
- 66 “___ fair in love and war”
- 67 TV’s Science Guy and others

DOWN

- 1 Breathing: Abbr.
- 2 “At Last” singer James
- 3 Spiced tea
- 4 High vocal range
- 5 Game involving tossing food around in a circle
- 6 Vowel-shaped home
- 7 Batman’s surname
- 8 California berry farm founder
- 9 Final: Abbr.
- 10 Barista’s workplace
- 11 Animal in a pride
- 12 Land measure
- 14 Something removed at a TSA checkpoint
- 19 Of no help
- 21 Tutti-___
- 24 “Toy Story” dinosaur
- 25 Like some pubs and goodbyes



- 26 About, date-wise
- 27 Follow, as an impulse
- 30 Bros
- 31 Magnetic induction unit
- 32 Fill with joy
- 34 Pearls found in boba
- 35 They have ambitions to achieve something
- 36 Drop by
- 42 Column’s counterpart
- 44 Folk music/dancing event
- 46 Count votes again

- 49 ___ apso (Tibetan dog breed)
- 50 Like some popular videos
- 51 Secrecy contracts, for short
- 52 “Kapow!”
- 53 Ring of light
- 54 ___ before: deadline words
- 56 You unlock a door with it
- 57 Fill with cargo
- 58 Peepers
- 60 Owner of the Mojo Dojo Casa House

Photo Courtesy of Hadley Forsen-Yepes

Ten things to do in the Omaha Central Library

Katie Besancon
staff writer

The Central High Library is one of the greatest resources available to students. Here's how to make the most of what the library has to offer this school year.

1. Playing chess and checkers

Are you an avid chess or checkers player? Go to the library during your free time to sit down and play a game, or even better, join the chess club with Stephan Bouma every Monday after school.

2. Lunch/study hall period

Moving into the library for lunch and study halls can be extremely helpful for students, providing a relaxing space with a wide array of seating options where you can do homework, watch a show or just relax for that period.

3. Check out books

One of the main things that libraries are known for is being able to check out books. Central has 11,000 books in its library and, in less than two weeks, has checked out 742 of them to students.

4. After school tutoring

If at any point you are struggling to understand any of your classes, the library offers after-school tutoring. You can sit down with teachers in the department that you are struggling with and work through your questions to ensure you have a better understanding of your subjects at no cost.

5. Desktop computers for research/academics

Many students prefer to type on a computer rather than on an iPad. If that's the case for you, go to the library before or after school or during your study hall or lunch to use the desktop computers for any school project, assignment or research, with the ability to print from them when you are finished.

6. Take naps

Didn't get a good night's sleep? Go to the library during your study hall and take a nap in the comfortable variety of seating they have to offer.

7. Watch the sunrise

The Central Library is known for its amazing views of the Omaha skyline—what better way to spend your morning than going to the library and watching the sunrise through the wall of windows independently or with friends?

8. Student aide

If you have a study hall or free period, you can become a library aide where you can help check books in and out, put them back on the shelves and help any staff when needed.

9. Talk to the librarians

The Central librarians are always able to talk. Whether you need help on a research paper or citing a website, they are ready to help. If you need a friendly face to talk about your day, the entire library staff is there for you.

10. Socialize with your friends

If you are a person who does not have many classes with your friends, you can go to the library before and after school to talk and gossip together.



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