

Not a better FAFSA

Delays in financial aid information impact student decisions

Hadley Forsen-Yepes
chief copy editor

Figure that they want to make it easier, but does making it easier take away from an actual representation of what the student's life is like and what they can afford?" senior Izzy Walocha asked about the updated 2024-2025 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Senior year of high school, the awkward period between childhood and adulthood, is when students must begin to make life-altering decisions about their futures. For many seniors at Central, one of these decisions is choosing where to pursue a secondary education.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a form meant to help college applicants compare the affordability of the institutions they have been accepted to. Applicants choose which schools to send their FAFSA to, and, in turn, receive an aid package from each school that informs them which scholarships, grants, and loans they qualify for. With recent changes to the FAFSA intended to simplify the process of filling it out, the federal government has achieved quite the opposite.

In previous years, the application opened on Oct. 1 and comprised 118 questions. The "better FAFSA," as the federal government advertised it, reduced the number of questions to 36. The tradeoff of the simplified form was a significantly delayed release and potentially inaccurate assessments of students' financial situations.

At the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, students were told that the FAFSA would open on Dec. 1. Ultimately, it opened on Dec. 30, merely one day before its government-mandated release deadline.

"Every time an email came in, [the FAFSA] would get pushed back again," Walocha said. "I think if they either didn't change it or they were more communicative about the change, then it would've been a lot easier."

Justman takes winding path to Nest, settles into role amid staff shortage

Jack Wilderman-Nielsen
contributing writer

Benjamin Justman is in the middle of teaching his third semester of classes at Central High School. Currently he is teaching sophomores and seniors in English 3-4, and English 7-8. After just one semester of student teaching last school year Justman was immediately offered a permanent position as an English teacher. Which he happily accepted and now hopes to continue working as a Central teacher for years to come.

This was not Justman's life goal coming out of high school. Going to University of Wisconsin he knew he wanted to be an English major, but teaching was not in the cards. He dropped out of UW after two years not knowing what he wanted to do.

"I took some time off, and then that time off turned into ten years" Justman joked about his "gap decade" away from college. During his time off he said he and a friend hitchhiked all across America for the first two years, picking up odd jobs and seasonal labor, before eventually he found his way to Omaha, where he settled into a five-year job in the restaurant business.

The restaurant business was not the life for him. "I thought about something that I could actually care about or find interest in and something that would challenge me and continue to help me grow and evolve a little bit... and being able to try and connect with community and be a part of the community, not just go to work and be disconnected from everyone." So he went back to college, something he found much harder to do now that he had his adult life well established in Omaha.

Justman knew having a job as an English teacher would combine a lot of his hobbies such as reading or writing with his interest in working with younger people. He said he found working with younger people more interesting than working with other adults at mundane jobs. After completing two more years of college, he was able to be a student teacher at Central. Omaha Public Schools was the best choice since they were the only district paying their student teachers.

Justman remarked that becoming a teacher is very challenging because they expect you to work a semester completely unpaid right out of college before they even consider hiring you. He's very happy he was picked up by Central right away.

Justman said he doesn't think much about there being "teacher shortages" at the moment. The biggest effect it has on him is his very large class sizes: upwards of 35 students in one period. He finds it hard to connect to students personally and to teach to ways that benefit certain

Once the FAFSA opened, students were still unable to fill out the form, which was riddled with bugs. "Students couldn't get their identification verified by social security," college counselor Angela Meyer said. "If they had an extra space at the end of their text field, that would throw it off. If the social security number ended in a zero, that was an issue."

"Some students [whose parents] may be undocumented or not have a social security number, they're having difficulties getting their FAFSA completed," Meyer said.

Meyer's biggest worry is that all the confusion and frustration surrounding the FAFSA will discourage students from filling it out. "They call the 800 number and either you're on hold forever or it just says, 'We have high call volume,' and it hangs up on them," she said. "So that's what I'm afraid of - that parents and students will just give up and not fight through this process."

The FAFSA website crashed on Walocha myriad times, but she credited her perseverance to complete it to watching her older sibling, years prior, submit the FAFSA and receive significant aid from universities as a result. Walocha acknowledged that other people running into FAFSA errors may not have had that same motivation.

"For a first-gen student or for a person who's never experienced financial aid, that would be really discouraging," she said.

After finally receiving students' FAFSAs in March, the federal government ran into additional issues while processing them. Once "processed" financial information was sent to schools, the government realized that it had used incorrect tax tables for the students and thus had sent out inaccurate numbers. Some schools chose to use these numbers as estimates so that applicants could have some idea of their aid package, but others opted to wait until the FAFSAs had been processed correctly.

"I heard 40% of the FAFSAs that were processed were hav-

ing to be reprocessed, so that's why some of our students are getting emails from colleges saying, 'We received your FAFSA,' and then the next email says, 'Your FAFSA was rejected,'" Meyer said.

As a result of these extreme delays, many colleges have extended their decision deadline, the day students must put down their enrollment deposit, from May 1 to June 1.

Walocha did not begin receiving financial aid packages until April. As of April 26, only half of the schools she sent her FAFSA to reported receiving her form. She has put down an enrollment deposit for a university, but it worries her that there may be advantageous financial aid offers from other schools that she is not yet aware of.

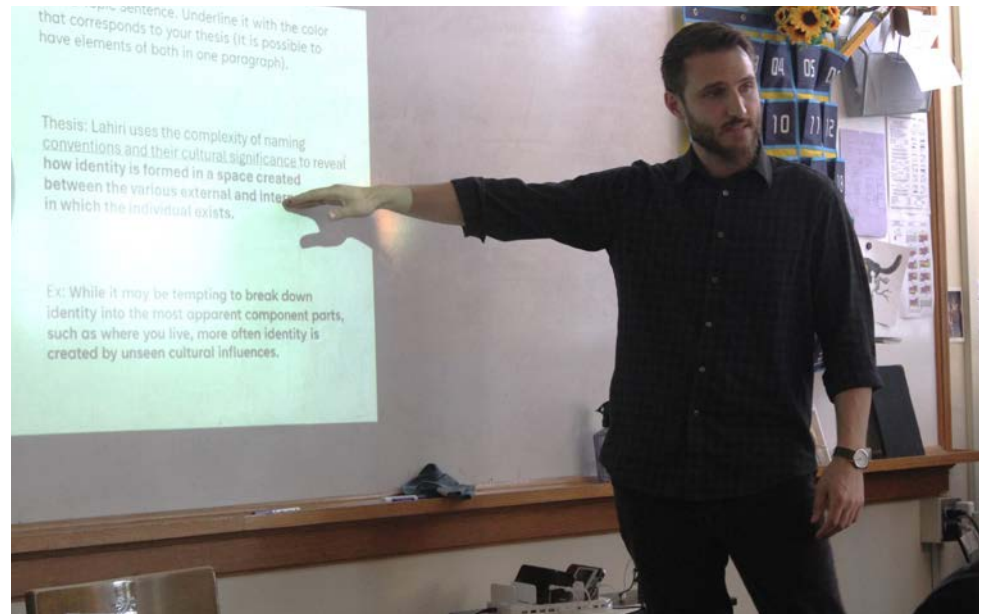
"I'm happy with the school I'm committed to, and I have a good scholarship, even if I don't feel the FAFSA represented me well," Walocha said. "But the commitment date is May 1, so if I don't have those other results - like if I get a full ride from another school I was considering, but I'm already committed to this school - I'm out \$500 because I'm withdrawing my enrollment deposit after the [due] date."

For other students, FAFSA delays mean that their options are limited to in-state schools. "I know that some students are just, instead of going for a school outside of Omaha, they're deciding just to stay in Omaha even more because they're going with the school they know is affordable for them," Meyer said.

Senior Etta Salzman fears that this will happen to them. The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville has everything Salzman is looking for in a university: a prestigious and well-funded art program and unparalleled law facilities, such as a proper mock trial courtroom.

The catch is that Salzman cannot attend the university unless they receive a scholarship covering 80% of the attendance costs. Arkansas has yet to receive any FAFSAs from

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English teacher Ben Justman describes a lesson.

Mauro Gutierrez | The Register

students when he has so many at once. He also noticed that despite it being slightly easier to find a job opening in the shortage that did not becoming a teacher any easier.

Coming from a steady income of five years then going into college being paid almost nothing and then interning as a student teacher was a challenge.

The teacher salary of course is not much either once he did get his official job. First year teachers with a bachelor's degree make \$45,000 a year for the 2023-24 school year, according to the master agreement between OPS and the teacher's union. Most student teachers do not get paid anything at all, and OPS only recently started doing so to try and get more teachers wanting to work in their district.

Even though there is a shortage, including at Central who currently have their lowest number of unfilled positions they have ever had. Justman said that many people he talks to are trying to become teachers and they haven't been able to find schools who will take them, Justman believes this is a fault of the system. "I think the process is a little convoluted at times and it's slow, there's no perfect answer but there's some sort of miscommunication down the line making it difficult. The jobs are there, they just aren't getting filled," Justman said.

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Students by day, assassins by night; seniors go out with a splash

Hadley Forsen-Yepes
chief copy editor

When signing up for Central's senior assassin, players understood that they were getting themselves into a water-drenched game of stalking and double-crossing. What they didn't realize was they would make some unlikely friends along the way.

Senior assassin is an internet sensation that instantly grabbed senior Dom Thomas' attention when he came across it on TikTok. Interested in bringing the water gun knockout game to Central, Thomas contacted senior Ruby Titus and asked if she could help him make it happen. Titus ultimately took the reins from Thomas and, with the assistance of Isabel Hoiberg, turned Central into a battleground.

Well, not literally. School is an off-limits zone, as outlined by the rules on the @chs24_seniorassassin Instagram page.

Central's senior assassin rules go something like this: players are each assigned a target they must eliminate by water gun. If they hit their target, the target is out of the game. If they don't eliminate their target, the assassin is out with no chance of redemption. The game will continue with multiple week-long rounds and new targets for each until there is a clear winner who will take home the prize of \$255.

This appealed to senior Beth Mergens, who was stressed about upcoming exams and sought participation in senior assassin to take her mind off academics. "Going into it, I wasn't really taking it seriously," Mergens said.

Neither was Mergens' partner-in-crime, senior Rosie Sossou. "For me, honestly, I just wanted to troll," Sossou said. "I wanted to be outside and stuff and shoot people with my gun and stalk them and stuff."

And stalk they did. From staking out their targets' houses to attending their baseball games to sending Rosie's sister to their doorsteps as an undercover cookie salesgirl, Mergens and Sossou were all in.

Unfortunately, so was Brayden Simpson, both Sossou's target and Mergens' assassin. On one climactic night, Simpson, accompa-

nied by friends, sat outside Mergens' house and tried to lure her outside. Mergens' mom was running from window to window, door to door, trying to make sure her daughter was safe from the assassin.

Meanwhile, Sossou's mom was having her try on clothes to wear for job interviews. "So, I was wearing a business casual outfit, got a little skirt on, like a blouse, and then Beth calls me," Sossou said. "So, then I'm like, 'Mom, I gotta go,' and I start running out the house in my business casual outfit."

Sossou played right into Simpson's hands because her assassin, Chance Gaillard, happened to be in Simpson's car. While Simpson was outside trying to eliminate Mergens, Sossou rushed outside, attempted to eliminate him, and then got assassinated by Gaillard in the process. "I think Brayden and his friends ... they lowkey made it fun," Sossou admitted.

To get back into the game, Sossou had to dump a bucket of ice water on her head.

"It was actually kind of fun, not gonna lie," she said.

Others did not have it as easy. Take Mergens, who was eliminated by assassin Ann Carlson and had to redeem herself by participating in the cinnamon challenge. She ate six spoonfuls purely because she did not like how she looked in the first five videos. "My stomach hurt so bad - I literally thought I had to get my stomach pumped, like, I was freaking out," Mergens said.

"The craziest redemption challenge, I think, was Jaden," Titus said. "I think that was probably the hardest [redemption] we did."

After senior Jaden Cheloha was eliminated by his best friend's twin sister, he was given two choices for redemption: the ice bucket challenge and the hot one's challenge, which entails eating a piece of chicken drenched in hot sauce.

Having already seen multiple ice bucket challenge redemption videos, Cheloha wanted to offer some variety, so he chose the latter. All he had to eat was one chicken nugget, "which was actually more than enough," he said.

After pouring some "Da Bomb" hot sauce on the nugget and eating it in one bite,

Cheloha set his mouth ablaze for the following 20 minutes. The first two minutes of his suffering are documented in the Instagram page's highlights. "I'm glad these are set in stone on Instagram because you can go look at it whenever," Titus said.

Another video on the page features senior Emily Mattson getting eliminated while standing behind the food counter at her job. "I was like, if I'm gonna spend \$5 on this, I'm gonna go all out," Mattson said. "I'm gonna get that pot; I'm gonna get all the money. And then I got clocked on the first day. And at work, which was so heinous."

"I didn't get in trouble for it but had someone else been working, I probably would've gotten reprimanded for it or something," Mattson said. Unfortunately, it was not until after she was eliminated that Titus created the rule that students' workplaces were off-limit zones. She created the rule after realizing that many players' bosses would not let them wear protective equipment, like goggles or visors, at their jobs.

This new rule did not change the fact that Mattson was still out from her workplace assassination. Her redemption choices were to wear a mustache to school or to wear a bike helmet to school. "If I'm gonna do one, I'm gonna do the other," she said. "So, I wore both, and I worked it! Somebody said, 'Yes, serving French Revolution,' and I loved it!"

In her second round, Mattson ran into an issue that seemed recurring for all the players featured in this article: getting assigned a target she did not know. "If you don't know the person, it's not as fun," Mergens said.

Mattson had some difficulty finding her target, but this did not hinder her ability to have fun. Channeling her inner FBI agent, she brought her friend along to stake out her target's house. They were there for hours and even searched the neighborhood for him with no luck. Mattson never got her target, and her time in the game came to an end at the close of the second round on April 14.

Her biggest regret was not eliminating him in the school parking lot, which is not considered a safe zone. "I had seen his car, and then I was like, 'There's my opportunity.' And

then I went to McDonald's. And then I came back, and he was gone," she said.

Entering the third round, the buzz surrounding senior assassin had died down. People were trying to pay each other off, give their assassin their location, and taking it less seriously than they had been in the first two rounds. "It happens with whatever is 'hot' at the time," Titus said. "It's hot gossip for a week, and then we're done. So, I'm glad it lasted for like two weeks - that was good!"

To Titus's amazement, many bonds formed in those two weeks. "There's some people who I would never have thought would be finding each other to go do senior assassin [together]," she said.

Mergens experienced this firsthand. "I've been talking to people that I would've never talked to before," she said. "It's bringing people together in the senior class, which is nice."

Titus is considering making a second game once the first game reaches its conclusion. Many people have requested this, including those who missed out on the first game and those who were in the first game but are now seeking revenge.

Additionally, she has had juniors contact her about organizing their own game of senior assassin next year. Titus is excited at the prospect of the incoming seniors carrying on this new tradition.

"As the years wind down and seniors have a little less to worry about, you don't want the reality of the fact that you're not going to see most of these people again to hit you, and so a good way to do that is to have one final big involvement from them," Cheloha said. "I see value in it as long as you don't put too much of yourself into it."

Even though she got eliminated at work, double-crossed by her friends, and had to wear a mustache and biker helmet to school, all thanks to senior assassin, Mattson holds the same sentiments as Cheloha. "Hashtag do senior assassin; it's so much fun," she said. "Go buy a water gun, please get goggles, and just have fun with it, bro. Don't take it too seriously."

Many college decision dates delayed due to FAFSA glitches

FAFSA from page 1

the university unless they receive a scholarship covering 80% of the attendance costs. Arkansas has yet to receive any FAFSAs from applicants, making it impossible for Salzman to know whether an education in Fayetteville is attainable.

"Because that's my top school, and I am reliant on what I hear back from my FAFSA for them and making sure that my other scholarships that I received can go through, I can't make a decision until that happens because if I don't go there, I am going to [the University of Nebraska Omaha], and I would rather not," Salzman said.

Two-thirds of the schools Salzman was accepted into have extended their decision deadline to June 1, but Salzman still feels that they must decide by May 1.

Each time Salzman opens Instagram, it is flooded with posts of their peers' commitments to various universities. While Salzman is happy for these college-bound students, seeing that they have already made their decisions makes them feel like they have been left behind.

"I know it's not my fault, but it's still just a little exhausting," Salzman said.

Similarly, Walocha yearns to give people a straight answer when they question her about her college plans. "All my cousins have asked me where I'm going to school, and I was like, 'I don't know because I don't know what I can afford yet,'" she said.

In addition to the students who have struggled with FAFSA delays, Meyer feels for financial aid offices across America. "The people that I really feel sorry for is the college's financial aid offices because they're having to do six months of work in four weeks," she said.

Salzman and Walocha hope that issues surrounding the FAFSA will be resolved next year. Additionally, they think that Central could be making more of an effort to help students navigate the FAFSA and the college admissions process as a whole. At Central, "the team is just so small, and they only cover so many things, that so much is left out," Salzman said.

"It was up to me and my own re-

sources to fill [out the FAFSA], decipher it, and kind of apply it to my situation," Walocha said.

Both seniors may be happy to learn that the state of Nebraska is implementing a new initiative that has made completing the FAFSA a high school graduation requirement. Ideally, this would entail more support for students and families completing the form.

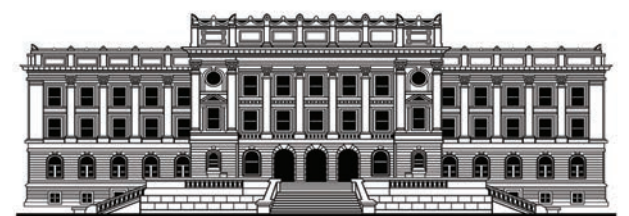
"I think it'll be good for students because the FAFSA is just a form," Meyer said. "You don't have to take out a loan, it just shows you what you have available if you so choose to use it. So really, there's no skin lost."

While the 2025-2026 FAFSA form will not be available until the Fall of 2024, current Central juniors can get a head start on the form by creating their Federal Student Aid ID. "Getting your identity verified is half the battle," Meyer said.

Walocha wishes the best for next year's seniors. "I hope that they feel they're accurately represented in their FAFSA and, if not, that they know that

they can appeal their FAFSA and make sure that they're able to go to schools that they want without being \$100,000 in debt."

For any questions or assistance on the FAFSA, contact OPS's community partner EducationQuest, which offers free advice on filling out the FAFSA, applying for scholarships, and selecting colleges.



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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.

Central elects senior class officers for 2024-25 school year

Grace Sunseri
staff writer

The elections of class officers for the 2024-2025 school year just passed and caused some stark competition. Every year, juniors get the chance to run for various student leadership positions that allows them to lead their class senior year. Meet your class of 2025 senior officers.

Devon Richards is the elected president for the class of 2025. Richards ran to make his senior year memorable and make everything a little more exciting. "I already have students coming up to me suggesting different ideas for events, which is just incredible," Richards said.

The vice president elect is Liam Gillespie. Gillespie said he ran to have an impact on his class. "I hope to be a voice for everyone, not just select groups, and really serve my classmates," Gillespie said.

Arissa Lattison was elected as secretary. "I ran for officer because I thought it'd be fun to have a

say in decisions for my final year. Central has given me a lot, and this could be my way to give back," she said.

Hugh Lowe-Weyand was elected treasurer but declined requests for comment.

Sanaii Houston-Wells was elected activities coordinator and did not respond to comment requests.

Finally, the elected historian is Jacqui Moss-Breen. "I really enjoy getting involved with things bigger than myself and I am hoping that I can bring a beam of spotlight onto everything this school and its students have to offer in this world," Moss-Breen said.

Purple Feather Day offers students a morning of fun

Steven Dickerson
staff writer

The 47th annual Purple Feather Day took place at Central's Seeman Stadium on April 23. Students who have a weighted GPA equal to or higher than 3.5 were invited to attend the celebration, which began in Eagle Time and continued through second block. This year's celebration included relay races, snacks, photo booths and inflatable obstacle courses.

"I love Purple Feather Day, and this year, it was elevated to something even more special," junior Kaitlyn Abboud said. Bounce houses were a pleasant addition that haven't been seen in the past, contributing to a great celebration, she said.

"I loved racing my friends in the bounce houses," sophomore Sienna Maskin said. Sophomore Izzy Worden agreed, saying the bounce houses made the experience far better than last year's celebration, which took place on a rainy day and did not include the same fun activities.

Students gave mixed reviews on the relay races. Worden said she was not a big fan since not everyone gets to partake in them. Junior Becca Rock, however, said she liked the relay races.

The snacks were a big hit, with attendees receiving a Central-themed gift bag filled with Takis

and grape Laffy Taffys, among other things. Purple donuts were also available on the field, attracting long lines.

"The donuts were so good I came back for seconds," Maskin said.

Abboud and Rock both made a point to mention how interactive this Purple Feather Day was compared to past celebrations. However, Rock wants to see a return of the signature Purple Feather Day flags, which were absent at this year's celebration.

Worden said she wants future celebrations to continue having bounce houses but extend the length of the celebration. "Ninety minutes was not enough time to enjoy the bounce houses, given the long lines," she said.

Regardless of what future celebrations look like, the requirement of having a 3.5 GPA will continue as tradition. Everyone The Register spoke to said the requirement is reasonable and that students who met it deserved their chance to go outside and clear their minds for a block.



Marion Crandell banner to be placed on second floor, third side

Katie Besancon
staff writer

Central U.S. History teacher Scott Wilson and English teacher Marcella Mahoney led the creation of a banner for Team Crandell above lockers on the third side of the second floor and are “using it as a way to extend and celebrate the team’s namesake,” Wilson said.

Central has four freshman teams, all named after an esteemed Central graduate and Hall of Fame inductee – one of which is named after Marion Crandell. Many of the students on Team Crandell know her story, yet this banner has compelled teachers on Team Crandell to let her story be known by all of Central because not only “does it fit into our World War I curriculum, [but] the more you learn about her, the more you find her as an interesting person,” Wilson said. “Her story is simply one worth telling.”

The Crandell banner will be an addition to the artwork around Central. Something many Central students don’t know is that around the halls, toward the ceiling, there is artwork that has been there since the building was built.

Crandell has been a name known around Central High for years, yet many do not know her story. Crandell was the first American woman to die on the World War I front. Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, but raised in Omaha, Crandell was a part of one of the first graduating classes from Omaha High School.

She went on to study French at Sorbonne University and received her teaching certification from the University of Colorado. Crandell was a French teacher at a small, all-girls school in Davenport, Iowa, when the war broke out.

She would later volunteer through the YMCA to go over to France “simply because she loved the French people,” Scott Wilson said in an interview with PBS. Crandell would go overseas and serve as the sense of comfort that soldiers needed on the front. Whether that was hot chocolate or lemonade, the women were there.

It was in the spring of 1918 when Crandell was in a German offensive, evacuating her team from their hut, when a German artillery shell came in, detonated, and fatally wounded her. She was taken to a nearby hospital, where she died a few hours later.

Crandell was given a soldier’s burial at the Sainte-Menehould and was the first woman to be buried in the cemetery of 6,000 French soldiers. Her body was later moved to where it rests now at the Meuse Argonne Cemetery in northern France, which is the largest American cemetery in Europe.



Photo Courtesy of SCOTT WILSON

“Nobody is going to write our story for us, so we have to be the ones who are the torchbearers of Central’s history,” Wilson said.

When deciding on what the banner was going to look like, Wilson worked with Central librarian Beth Wilson. “He gave me a general idea of what he and Mrs. Mahoney were going for – they wanted to include some of the familiar photos and artifacts we relate to Marion Crandell, the team logo that we designed together a couple of years ago, and poppies,” Beth Wilson said.

The banner will consist of elements such as poppies, which are the symbol of World War I and are on the Crandell team logo, the original Omaha High School building, the picture of the plaque from the WWI memorial here at Central, images of what YMCA volunteer women did at the war front, a newspaper clipping from the Central Register archives, and a picture of the Central WWI service flag, along with pictures of Crandell.

“I love that I will be able to walk outside of 234 and see Marion Crandell, but I am more excited for future students even after I am retired [who] will be curious about the history of Marion Crandell,” Wilson said.

The twins keeping Central history alive

Jane McGill
staff writer

Central High School Alumni Association’s Historical Committee debuted a new historical display in Central’s Arts and Library addition over winter break.

The Alumni Association, which was founded in 1996, works to preserve the history and time-old traditions of Central. The Association already maintains three history displays in the courtyard.

“There was an enormous amount of time and effort that went into preparing the display and getting permission for all the photographs,” said Jeannette Rice Johnson, who co-chairs the Historical Committee with her twin, Jeannene Mason. The sisters are both proud graduates of the Central High Class of 1964.

Mason worked in various roles in Millard Public Schools for 28 years before becoming an educational consultant for McGraw-Hill, and later founding her own consulting firm.

Rice-Johnson worked accounting jobs throughout her long career. Both sisters now spend much of their retirement assembling artifacts from Central’s past in the archive room, located on the second floor of the new addition beneath the library. Central students are not allowed to enter the

archive room without being chaperoned by an authorized adult.

The historical display is the first public-facing showing of the items the sisters have been collecting. The exhibit includes pictures of Central through the years from the Durham Museum’s KMTV Bostwick Collection, two documents chronicling school history written by alumni, statues of the Eagle mascot, and even a roll of toilet paper from 1969.

The second floor of the new addition was built with a space for amassing trinkets from the school’s past in mind.

The stark gray room is lined with binders full of old documents and miss-matched heirlooms on shelves. “Before, everything was in this little closet at the foundation,” Mason said. “We’re very fortunate to have this room.”

The sisters rely on alumni sending in memorabilia from their high school years to the school to continually expand the archive’s collection. The sisters are aiming to collect three copies of the O-Book from each year of its publication.



Jeanine Mason speaks about the archives.

Chris Battallion



Chris Battallion | The Register



Chris Battallion | The Register

Bonner: security guard, basketball coach, mentor

Iyanna Wise
staff writer

Jermond Bonner is a dedicated basketball coach and head of security that has been at Central for eight years. He takes his jobs very seriously and values the importance of student-coach relationships.

Bonner is originally from Birmingham, Alabama. He moved to Omaha in 1994 during his seventh-grade year, attending Beveridge and Morton Middle School. He moved back to Alabama for his eighth-grade year, returning to Omaha to attend Central High School for his freshman year. He went back to Alabama again but returned to Omaha to finish out his high school years at Omaha South High School.

During his back and forth between Alabama and Omaha, Bonner participated in basketball from his seventh-grade year to senior year and played varsity for two years.

After high school, Bonner received a scholarship to Iowa Central Community College and NCAA Division II offers from Minnesota colleges. Bonner attended Iowa Central for two years before transferring to the University of Northern Iowa in 2005. He said that he wished he'd accepted one of the Minnesota schools instead, but he didn't know better.

Bonner always knew he wanted to return to basketball. "It's always been my passion. I grew up watching basketball, always had a love for the game, always knew it was something I eventually wanted to do," he said.

He got his coaching certification during his first year of college.

Soon after graduating in 2008, Bonner started getting involved in security and moved back to Omaha in 2010. He first worked at The Old Mattress Factory downtown then expanded to nightclubs and bars. He worked at bigger events like March Madness and University of Nebraska-Lincoln football games and worked for the College World Series for 10 years. Any local security event, he was there.

Bonner eventually made his way back to Central in 2017. He came into it wanting to coach, but he didn't feel welcomed by the coach at the time. He was sometimes put to the side, so he took on head of security.

Bonner was against the stereotype that security guards do nothing. "We're doing a whole bunch. I'm watching cameras all day, we're checking doors; it's a big responsibility," he said.

Bonner also explained that he takes his job as security seriously because of Central's size. Central has nearly 2,500 students, so he said that the safety of students is incredibly important. He wants to make sure everyone that should be in the building is and to look out for anyone suspicious.

Bonner joined the coaching staff not too long after the new boys' basketball coach, Bruce Chubick Jr., joined the team. He asked Bonner if he wanted to continue coaching, as he knew that he had experience. Bonner said that he felt more welcomed by Chubick and accepted the opportunity.

Since his time at Central, Bonner said that he always felt the school was special because of



CRIS BATAILLON | The Register

its unique location downtown, excelling in academics, supportive foundation and alumni, as well as domination in sports. "I see kids that transfer or went somewhere else and they always say the same thing: 'Mr. Bonner I should have never left Central.' So, it kind of lets me know," he said.

He feels that Central is the best school in OPS for its accomplishments and rich traditions. "It's Champ High, I don't know why you wouldn't come to Central," he said.

Usually, security guards are seen breaking up fights, which can be seen as a negative interaction between staff and students. Bonner said this is why it's important for staff and students to build mutual respect between each other. He said that his job as a security guard and coach helped him do that. "I know the kids hate it, but I'm always giving them pep talks when they get in trouble and I can see the look on their faces...since I've been here, I've always built up a good rapport with the kids, so that means a lot to me," he said.

He said that having mutual respect between him and the students stems from his authenticity, and he said that students notice this about him. He's able to connect with students by having silly conversations and relating to their situations. Bonner grew up on 16th Street, so he always talks to students about right and wrong. "Kids want to know too, they want to be held accountable and that's a big thing," he said.

Outside of his busy life at school, Bonner says he likes to watch sports and vacation with his family. He tries to travel at least twice over the summer and goes out to have fun when asked, but he said that he's mostly a home body since he works a lot.

Central students to explore Europe on two-week excursion

Bradley Smith
contributing writer

Central High School history teacher Scott Wilson has created an opportunity for students to be a part of a 13-day long trip across Europe, being among one of the largest school trips that Central has hosted.

The Europe trip is primarily based on learning more about the two World Wars and of course, simply just getting to see multiple countries and sightseeing. Which will end up being a total of 13 jam-packed days of traveling from London to Normandy, Paris, and France, then over to the Western Front, Belgium, and the Battle of the Bulge site and all the way to Netherlands and Amsterdam.

There are much deeper connections for the trip beyond going to see old war sites and museums, and most of the deeper reasons connect back to Central High School. During the Western Front section of the trip, people on this trip will be able to visit the burial place of famous 1889 Central graduate Marion Crandell, who is also one of the freshmen team namesakes. Then during the Netherlands section of the trip, members of the trip will be able to visit gravesites of six Central graduates and be hosted by the local townspeople and the mayor. "We'll have this really cool connec-

tion with the town," Wilson said.

Not only does the trip have big connections to Central overall, but some of Wilson's inspirations for this trip have connections to Central, too. Wilson wanted to share his love for history with the students and staff of Central. He was inspired to start his own trips after chaperoning during some of Central Hall of Fame inductee and teacher, Rita Ryan's trips across Europe throughout her 42 years of teaching at Central, and before her passing in 2022.

Wilson also shared that some of the teachers who will be assisting with chaperoning are among some of the newer teachers that have come to Central to teach. Although, some of them are not all just new teachers coming to work at Central, some of them are past Central students who got to experience past trips that Central has gone on. "It comes full circle being able to take students who are now educators," Wilson said.

If students are interested in traveling across Europe, have a large interest in history, or simply want to be a part of school history, the trip will take place in the first two weeks of June 2025. There will be a max of 40 students who can go on the trip with a few spots remaining currently, and students should contact Wilson for specific details.

Joslyn Museum to open in September

Becca Rock
staff writer

The Joslyn Art Museum will be reopening on Sept. 10, 2024, with a new addition and new brand modeling.

Joslyn is using the renovation for a full modernization, including the launch of a new website.

New extended hours have been made which include late nights on Wednesdays and Thursdays where they will be open until 8 p.m.

Physically, The Joslyn added 42,000 square feet for the Rhonda & Howard Hawks Pavillion. This Pavillion was designed in collaboration with Snøhetta and Alley Poyner Macchieto Architecture. This area expands the amount and gallery space and will help the museum hold long-term art but also feature temporary exhibits.

On opening day four temporary exhibits will be on display. They include "Clément Cogitore," which is an art form that is both cinema and photography. This exhibit examines rituals and memory. The second exhibit is Eva Lewitt's work of sculptures and installations. The third is "Kehinde Willey: Omaha" which shows second-generation South Sudanese's immigrants who live in Omaha.

Lastly, the "Ed Ruscha: Paper" exhibit, which is a celebration of his work by his use of image and text.

Admission to the museum is always free, but ticketed exhibitions will cost \$10. There will be multiple occasions where these exhibitions will be free.

Once the museum opens, Central students can interact with different art forms after school hours and field trips to the museum.

"We are looking forward to welcoming Central High students, teachers, and staff over to the Museum," said Director of Marketing & Public Relations Amy Rummel.



Whitman Rutledge | The Register

UMMC Shadow Sunday offers hands-on opportunity

Isabella Smith
contributing writer

University of Nebraska Medical Center provides an event called Shadow Saturday which gives students the opportunity to learn more in depth about medical laboratory science professions and also allowed UNMC to recruit future students into their program.

Shadow Saturday happens every year usually in the fall, but this year the event took place April 13 at UNMC. It was open to all high school and college students who may be interested in science, healthcare, or laboratory work but want to know more about it.

The event also provided an opportunity to see different career paths in the medical field that aren't only about doctors or nurses. "Many people do not know what we do which is why outreach events like Shadow Saturday are so important," said Kevin McGuire, an assistant professor at UNMC.

In this event, participants were able to engage in hands-on laboratory activities and interactive sessions to learn about what medical laboratory scientists do every day. Some of these things allow the students to work with laboratory equipment such as microscopes and centrifuges to perform real testing in areas of clinical chemistry.

Some of the advantages students can take away from this event are gaining practical knowledge about laboratory procedures, the opportunity to see what a medical laboratory science student does daily and overall exposure to this medical field. Students can even gain networking opportunities by interacting with current staff and students who work at UNMC.

"We provide individuals an opportunity to walk in the shoes of an MLS for a few hours," McGuire said.

UNMC also provides other events that are similar to Shadow Saturday, such as Backstage Pass or Nebraska Medicine Job Shadow Program. Both events allow people interested in health sciences to explore other career paths they may not have thought of or known about before.

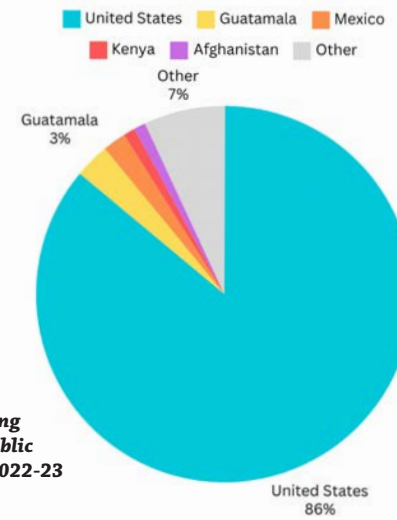
Migrant and refugee seniors reflect on time at Central

Ethan Hughes
staff writer

This year, there are 73 graduating seniors who are either migrants or refugees from foreign countries. Overall, last year, the most recently available data, Central had 322 English Learner students, about 172 refugee students and over a hundred current or former migrants. (OPS no longer considers a student a migrant if they have lived in Omaha more than three years).

The Register wanted to highlight a few of those who will be graduating this year, and some of their struggles, like adjusting to a new culture and having to learn a new language.

The Register interviewed five of these students: Godliver Daniel, from Tanzania; Tamana Hussain Khil, a student from Afghanistan; Abdul Mohammadi, also from Afghanistan; Ngbola Lukwesa, who is from Zambia; and Rubi Mora, from Mexico.



Data according to Omaha Public Schools for 2022-23 school year.

Abdul Mohammadi

Lily Hartley
staff writer

Abdul Mohammadi, a senior EL student at Central High School, moved from Afghanistan to the U.S. in the summer of 2022.

For Mohammadi, Central has been a welcoming and helpful environment in adjusting to life here and learning the language.

“English was really difficult, but now I know and can speak the language, which has pushed me to achieve my goals,” Mohammadi said. “My teachers helping me and pushing me have really impacted me.”

Upon his transition, Mohammadi sought to get involved at school. “I’m involved in EL leadership, and I help with translating languages when they need it,” Mohammadi said. “I also help tour the school with incoming freshmen, translating for them as well.”

For Mohammadi, the journey hasn’t just been about academics and activities, it’s been about forging connections and building friendships.

“I’ve met a lot of people from different countries and different cultures, and now I have lots of friends,” Mohammadi said. “It’s such a great community here at Central.”

After graduation, Mohammadi plans to attend University of Nebraska at Omaha and study business. Further down the line, he wishes to become a real estate agent or work in business administration.

“Sometimes it’s hard, but we have to learn to not give up,” he said.



Tamana Hussain Khil

Arisa Lattison
arts & culture editor

Tamana Hussain Khil is a senior at Central High School. Hussain Khil’s home country is Afghanistan, and she moved to America in 2022. When she came to Omaha, she was placed in a language school where she took placement tests and then was transferred to Central.

To Hussain Khil, Central was completely different from anything she had expected. They didn’t have technology, and so most work was done on blackboards, as opposed to the smartboards that U.S. schools have.

Schools also were not co-educational; therefore, boys and girls did not attend classes together. Hussain Khil was a little uncomfortable at first—given that for 10 years of her life that was what she was used to—but she got used to it with time.

When she got here, one of the first things she noticed was how kind the teachers were to her.

“Everything was new,” she said. “But my English teachers and the school counselors were helpful.”

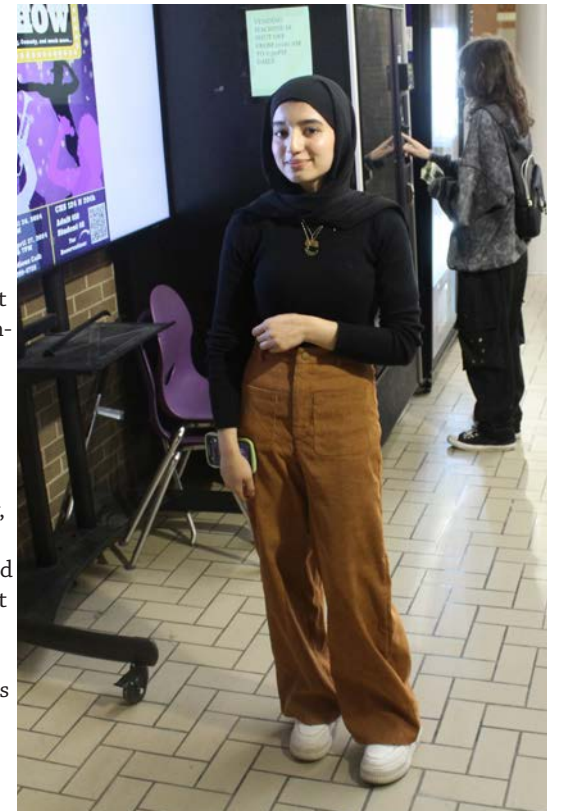
Her relationship with the teachers here resembled that of her time in Afghanistan, as they both helped and supported her where they could.

When Hussain Khil left her country, she didn’t think there was any hope.

“It was too hard to study, I tried hard to reach my goals in a hard situation, but everything was gone,” she said. “Central gave me hope.”

After graduation, Hussain Khil plans to study nursing in order to help others. She has received a scholarship to attend Metropolitan Community College for free, with a scholarship that “out of 100 people, only five people got.” She is still waiting to hear from other colleges on scholarships before deciding on one.

“In my society, women were told they cannot be successful,” Hussain Khil said. “In my opinion we can do anything we want by trying hard.”



Ngobola Lukwesa

Ilyanna Wise
staff writer

Ngobola Lukwesa is originally from the country of Zambia in southern Africa. Life in Zambia was financially difficult. “It was really hard to have everything we needed,” she said. At the time, Lukwesa was living in a refugee community.

She arrived to the United States through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, an agency that protects and provides aid to refugees and displaced communities and people. The U.N. had the responsibility of taking people from the refugee camps and getting them to the states, and Lukwesa was a part of that group.

She hasn’t visited Zambia since after moving to the states.

When it came to American education, Lukwesa didn’t have much of a choice for her school. Her case workers pretty much handled everything. When she first got to the school the biggest trouble was navigating Central’s large campus.

She said that compared to Central, schools in Zambia were really small. She got lost a lot, but due to helpful teachers, she got the school down. It also took her a while to get used to Omaha, but now she can successfully maneuver through the city.

She even said that she got lost on the way home from school after her first day. She wasn’t used to everyone getting picked up to go home and she just rode the bus until she got home.

A huge shock to Lukwesa was the lack of students of color at Central compared to Zambia. She was used to the majority of students looking like her. “I was thinking, maybe I will be able to find friends of my color, but I couldn’t,” she said.

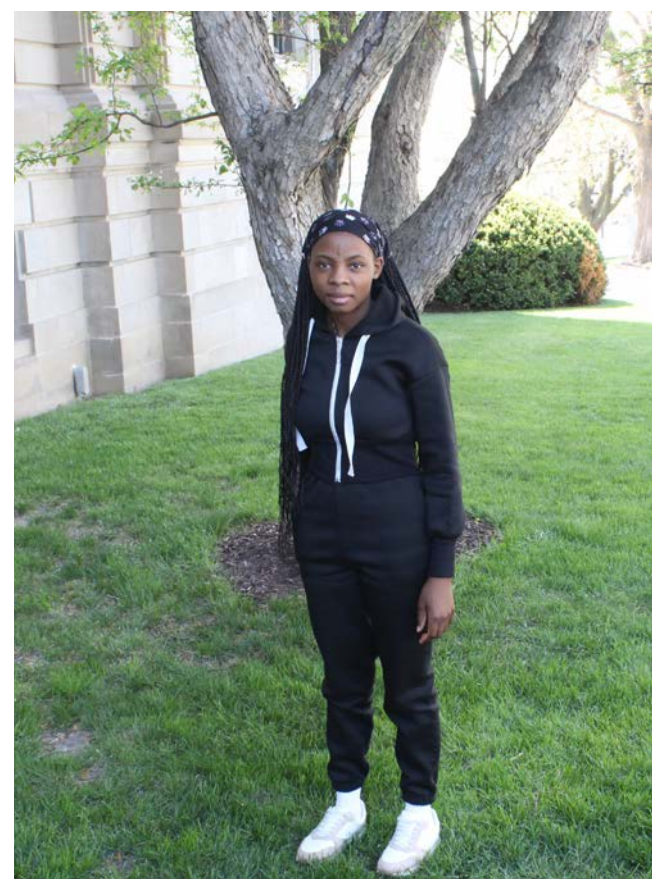
According to Britannica, three-fourths of the population in southern Africa, including Zambia, is Black. And according to the district demographic data, about 70% of Central students are minorities, with about 26% being Black.

It took some time for Lukwesa to get used to the drastic change in her environment. “I was thinking it was hard to make friends with different colors, but things turned out different...now I have a lot of friends,” she said.

Another shocking difference was the educational system. Lukwesa said that Zambia didn’t offer as many courses as compared to Central.

A positive experience she had besides helpful teachers was that Central didn’t have corporal punishment like in Zambia. “I always learn freely without fear,” she said.

Lukwesa’s counselor helped her come to the conclusion that her plan after high school should be to get a job and go to college the year after and major in nursing.



Migrant And Refugee Seniors Reflect On Time At Central

Rubi Mora

Millie Jackson
staff writer

Senior Rubi Mora transitioned from Mexico to the United States for opportunities and education and is now preparing to graduate Central with new experiences and fond memories.

Upon making the move from Mexico, Mora was initially surprised by the scale and culture difference of this new environment.

"I didn't expect Central to be so big," Mora said. "In Mexico, the culture, the people, everything was really different."

In the United States, Mora's expectations were different from reality. Instead of the crazy parties she saw in movies, she found herself surrounded by a diverse community. She met people from varying backgrounds and learned about their lives.

"I liked it a lot because I have learned a lot about many people from different backgrounds, different countries, and all the challenges they experienced in their countries and why they moved here," Mora said.

Mora found an abundance of support and inclusivity in her new community, particularly from teachers who went out of their way to ensure students from diverse backgrounds felt welcomed and valued.

"Teachers here are so nice to us because they know we came from different countries and backgrounds, and they are always helping those people to feel included and to feel like they belong here," Mora said.

Looking ahead, Mora is facing a tough decision of whether to stay in the United States for college or go back to Mexico, where she feels a strong connection to her home.

"I want to go to college, but I also want to go back to Mexico," Mora said.

She's been accepted to colleges in the United States and is interested in studying criminal justice and criminology with the goal of becoming a detective.



Godliver Daniel

Josephine McLaughlin
staff writer



Starting high school for anyone is nerve racking, but also being over 8,000 miles away from your home country, having to learn a new language, and not knowing people is a whole other level of nerve racking.

This is what senior Godliver Daniel had to deal with when moving from her very small school in her home country, Tanzania, all the way to Omaha Central High School.

"When I first came here I was really nervous," Daniel said. "I didn't know anyone and was very scared to start."

Daniel moved to Omaha in 2019 at the age of 14 years old and started her freshman year of high school at Central in 2020

"When I came to Omaha there was a person helping immigrant students find schools and he helped me find Central and get (to) start school," Daniel said.

Not only was Daniel's everyday life drastically different now in Omaha, but also her education. There were very few students where Daniel went to school in

Tanzania and schools would often lack many essentials for the students. For the few students who could attend school, they weren't always able to be there at set times.

"Where I'm from there was not a lot of students because we had no big classes with desks and chairs," Daniel said. "Some students would come in the morning and some came in the afternoon."

With only a few days left of her high school career, Daniel hopes to continue with her education through college and possibly nursing school.

"I know I want to go to college for two or four years and I want to start nursing," Daniel said.

Congratulations Register Seniors!



AVENUES TOWARDS EQUALITY

Filibuster contested locally, nationally

Charlie Yale
co-editor-in-chief

In early April, Nebraska State Senators were unable to overcome a filibuster during debate on LB575. Known as the “Sports and Spaces Act,” LB575 aimed to ban transgender students from using restrooms or playing on sports teams that didn’t align with their assigned sex at birth.

Nebraska’s Unicameral Legislature has a storied history with the filibuster. Former Senator Ernie Chambers held the record for the longest consecutive filibuster until he was overtaken by Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, who currently represents Nebraska’s Sixth Legislative District.

In recent years, Democratic senators have increasingly supported the repeal or removal of the filibuster. Even staunch institutionalists, like President Joe Biden, who served in the Senate for more than 35 years (and supported the filibuster the entire time), switched their positions after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Not since 1979 has any party held at least 60 seats to break the Senate filibuster.

As national Democrats fight to get rid of the filibuster to enshrine abortion rights into law, there is a different story in some of our most conservative state legislatures. Now more than ever, as state level legislators continually attempt to (and in some circumstances, are able to) limit the rights of marginalized groups, the filibuster has become a tool to protect the rights of the minority in Nebraska.

A filibuster is any tactic used by a legislator to try and halt a bill from passing. When a legislator signals intent to filibuster a piece of legislation, the threshold for that legislation to pass typically moves from a majority (50%) vote to a supermajority (66%) vote that is required to end debate.

The Senate of the United States is defined by slim majorities, and without 60 members to defeat the filibuster, no singular party will be able to pass legislation besides things that are considered “compromises.” This sounds good in theory, but in the Senate, the filibuster has been used to achieve goals that the entire country should now consider unprincipled. The late Strom Thurmond, record-holder for the longest national filibuster, spoke for 24 hours and 18 minutes against the Civil Rights Act of 1957 in favor of segregation.

In Nebraska, Senators have a variety of methods at their leisure to slow or halt the passage of a piece of legislation. They can file motions or amendments to pieces of legislation that soak up debate time. Senators may move to recommit a bill to the committee that

it exited from, requiring a vote.

The ultimate tool that Nebraska Legislators have is to invoke the filibuster during debate on a piece of legislation. To end debate on a bill, the legislative body must vote on “cloture,” requiring a supermajority to pass. When a filibuster is invoked, even if less than a supermajority of the chamber supports the legislation, there is less debate time for the legislature to address other matters deemed important. If less than 33 Senators vote for cloture, the bill is deemed dead and unable to continue forward.

The view that the filibuster is important isn’t shared by all Nebraskans. As a matter of fact, many Senators would like to do away with it entirely. In an interview with *The New York Times* on Apr. 11, Nebraska Senator Steve Erdman remarked, “The minority has their voice. Once you share your opinion, we vote, and the majority rules.” To be fair, Erdman made this statement in reference to the debate over doing away with Nebraska’s split electoral vote system – but the sentiment remains ever-salient. Partisan Republicans in Nebraska want to do away with the filibuster to pass their legislative agenda.

Who can blame them?

In a state ruled by a Republican supermajority (a majority that cannot be stopped by the filibuster), Nebraska Democrats are stuck using every tactic in the book to try and block legislation they see as harmful. Often, it doesn’t work, as seen by the passage of a restrictive abortion and gender affirming care ban in early 2023. But the filibuster was able to lessen the harm of the ban, increasing the threshold from a 6-week ban to a 12-week ban when Senator Merv Riepe voted with Democrats against cloture.

In states with partisan supermajorities, though, the ruling party is given nearly carte blanche in redrawing districts, and the effects can be disastrous. Look to Wisconsin, a state where the governor is a Democrat and both legislative bodies are Republican dominated. More than half of Wisconsin voted for Democrats in the legislature, but Republicans were still able to maintain control. Through their previous supermajorities and former Wisconsin Supreme Court majority, the state was able to gerrymander itself into a source of Republican power. In instances like these, especially when the so-called majority wants to remove the rights of the minority by introducing and passing anti-trans, anti-educational and anti-people-of-color policy, the filibuster becomes an all-important tool to protect against the pitfalls of democratic absolutism.

Opill offers more accessible birth control option

Arisa Lattison
arts & culture editor

On July 13, 2023, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) approved the “Opill” as the first, nonprescription oral birth control pill. Just a few months ago on March 18, this form of contraception was released to the public for purchase.

When I heard about this, I was pretty skeptical. A birth control pill that doesn’t need to be prescribed to you? What makes it different from other pills? Is it effective? Is it affordable? Most importantly, is it safe?

Because of my curiosity, I did a little digging so that you wouldn’t have to; here is all you need to know about Opill!

What is Opill?

Opill is birth control that works by thickening the cervical mucus, thinning the lining of the uterus, and preventing the release of an egg from the ovary. It works like any other birth control pill, except for combination pills which consist of both progesterin and estrogen. Opill only contains progesterin.

High doses of estrogen, a female hormone, can increase side effects from birth control. Estrogen can slightly increase the risk of heart issues and additionally raise blood pressure. In their approval of Opill, the FDA stated that there were fewer risks and side effects associated with Opill because it doesn’t contain estrogen.

How it works

Opill is an oral (taken by mouth) birth control that should be taken daily at the same time every day. It does not become effective until 48 hours in. If not taken within a certain time frame, its efficacy goes down and should not be counted on until it has been taken for two days in a row. Opill has been pronounced easy and simple to use with only the instructions that come with the box. This is good because so many people will have access to it; the easier it is to use, the less likely mistakes are to be made.

Safety

Since Opill is progesterin-only, almost anyone with a uterus can use it with no side effects. There are no age restrictions as long as you have started your menstrual period. However, according to the FDA, some side effects may include irregular vaginal bleeding, nausea, breast tenderness and headaches.

In terms of effectiveness, when taken correctly, Opill is 98% effective. This means out of every 100 individuals, two or less are likely to get pregnant.

Cost

For a month’s supply of 28 tablets, it costs \$19.99, while a three-month supply of 84 is \$49.99 and half a year is \$89.99 with 168 pills. This makes it more affordable and accessible to teenagers and families without health insurance.

But this is also a setback. Opill, because it is over the counter, is not covered by health insurance in most states, including Nebraska. The cost can add up considerably over time. Additionally, for teens who wish to purchase without their parents’ knowledge suffer the cost of

the prices.

A student who wishes to remain anonymous spoke to me about her experience on birth control and her opinion regarding Opill. This student takes Tri-Sprintec, which is a pill similar to Opill.

“I’ve had a pretty positive experience with birth control,” she said. “I have little to no acne when my period comes around, and I no longer cramp before my period starts.”

Tri-Sprintec contains both estrogen and progesterin. The student got on it to help with her hormonal acne and cramps.

“I will say that my first period on birth control I had excruciating cramps and was experiencing pain that I hadn’t felt before.”

It is important to note that the menstrual period you get during birth control isn’t your actual period. According to the National Library of Medicine, it is a “scheduled” period, where bleeding “results from the withdrawal of hormones during the placebo week.” Regular periods occur when your hormones rise and fall naturally.

Opill does not have a placebo pill (sugar pill) like other birth controls may have. However, some individuals skip over their sugar pills anyway and go onto the next dosage—meaning their functions are generally the same.

The student believes that birth control should be available to everyone, but people should wait until their body adjusts to a regular menstrual cycle to start it. The benefits can be numerous: it can help with confidence for students with acne, it works as contraception and it allows people with painful periods, such as people with endometriosis, to live normal lives and be at school and work.

However, birth control in itself can be a huge responsibility.

“If you’re taking a steroid of sorts, the benefits of birth control will cancel out,” she said. “If you take it at irregular times your period could be late [and] if you’re using it as a form of contraception, you can still get pregnant even if you’re doing everything right.”

No matter whether you decide Opill is for you or not, we caution that individuals use it safely and responsibly and consult a doctor if needed.

“[It] will help so many people who can’t afford prescription birth control, and who are looking for a way to safely regulate their cycles and drastically decrease the chances of getting pregnant.”



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How Central changed my life p. 9
By the time you read this column, I will no longer be a Central student.

The Register leaves its mark p. 9
We are lucky to have been students of The Register.

Living abroad brings blessings, loss p. 10
When I tell people I lived in Germany for half a decade, I usually get an iteration of “you’re so lucky” and “do you speak German?”

Bathroom behavior disrupts use p. 11
Trying to find a usable restroom is becoming harder and harder at Central.

How Central changed my life

Jane McGill
staff writer

By the time you read this column, I will no longer be a Central student. When your eyes graze this column, dear reader, I may be a starry-eyed recent graduate, a weary middle-aged cynic, or a kind-hearted old woman reminiscing about her yesteryears. Regardless, one thing remains true: If I walk these age-old halls again, I will do so as a stranger to the school I once called home.

I anticipate my high school experience will end in much the same way it began: not with a bang, but with a whimper. I spent my first day as a high schooler confined to my basement, transfixed by the iPad, which was my only means of being educated amid the pandemic sweeping the world.

In subsequent years, we avoided speaking about this time for fear of dredging up the trauma that was inflicted on us all by our social isolation. As much as we would prefer to forget those early months of high school, for the class of 2024, being a freshman meant desperately trying to summon the courage to unmute yourself during a Teams meeting.

I was among the first cohort of freshmen to return to school in the second quarter of that ill-fated school year. All throughout my time at Central, I heard stories about a school that my classmates and I never experienced. Before the pandemic, students were friendlier, the teachers were livelier, the classes were harder, the parties were louder, and the issues plaguing Central were far less pressing. I am inclined to believe that the tales I heard were embellished, but they nevertheless left me mourning the place that people swore Central once was.

By junior year, we settled into some sort of normalcy. A masked teacher or student became a rare sight in the hallways, but none of us were ever quite the same.

I learned quickly, as we all must, that Central High School is a tangled web of contradictions. It is a historic institution coping with the consequences of rapid technological change, a downtown high that prides itself on its diversity yet perpetuates racial and economic disparities in its academics, a grand beauty whose secrets are never quite revealed and dreams never quite realized.

At a high school the size of Central, personal success is often measured by the speed at which one finds their niche. The most consequential decision I made in high school was enrolling in a journalism class my freshman year.

This introductory course ignited an immoderate passion for the craft I would become known for and impelled me to join *The Register* staff as a sophomore.

In room 029, I attempted to master the understated art of journalism. I engineered the most gripping news leads, composed the most revealing interview questions, and pursued the most ambitious investigations. Stories I have written for *The Register* have been taught in Creighton University courses, debated at OPS school board meetings, and read on the floor of the Nebraska Legislature.

Throughout my three years on this paper's staff, my commitment to writing the most im-

portant journalism possible at times amounted to an unhealthy obsession. Journalism Adviser Brody Hilgenkamp had to pull me aside as a junior to ask if my "C" in Honors Chemistry was due to the sheer number of hours I spent hunched over a computer monitor in his classroom.

As a high schooler, I lived by and for journalism. It was only during my senior year that I made an honest attempt to balance my responsibilities and step away from the newspaper when I felt my role there consuming my life.

I will soon be studying journalism as a college student in the hopes of turning my heartfelt passion into a lifelong pursuit. I will always owe a debt of gratitude to Central and *The Register* for introducing me to the Fourth Estate.

My final week at Central has been marked by my adamant refusal to accept that I will leave this place for good in a matter of days. I have caught myself staring at a clock mounted on a classroom wall more than once, thinking about how my remaining time here is being whittled away before my eyes, but not truly comprehending the enormity of that looming change.

Graduation will be an afterthought for me. I cannot imagine any ceremony could gift me closure after all I have experienced these past four years. There will be no grand finale, no moment of catharsis, no third act in this consequential chapter of our lives. One day, we seniors will file obediently into our classrooms, and the next, we will be gone, leaving some part of ourselves behind here.

The meaning of these years and the importance of all that was said and done here will not be settled when we saunter across the stage in Baxter Arena. Instead, its significance will be carefully constructed in retrospect by each graduate. Many of us will look back on our high school years with something less than undiluted fondness, bitterly recalling our teenage sorrows. For many others, each day that passes after graduation will endow them with a rosier view of their high school years as they wistfully long for times past.

I hope I will not surrender my memories of Central to nostalgia or anguish but instead recall these years as the mercurial, whirlwind coming-of-age that it was. After all of the joys and woes, the trials and triumphs, I know that these four years have shaped me into the woman I am today. I set off now as one more young adult whose path in life has been irrevocably changed by my experience as a Central High student.

As for the school I leave behind, I fear its future is as uncertain as my own. Central is a monument from a bygone era, the kind of populous downtown high school that was converted into luxury apartments in every other American city decades ago. It has only withstood the test of time because of the determination of all those who have walked wonderstruck through its halls to uphold the school's legacy.

In the past four years, rising student poverty, a worsening teacher shortage, the spread of violence and drug use, and a malevolent political climate surrounding public education in Nebraska have coalesced into a tidal wave of new headaches for the school.

To protect this imperfect, extraordinary institution, the students, teachers and graduates of this school must fight more fiercely than ever for the next generation's right to be educated. The fate of Central High School rests in our hands.

The Register leaves its mark

Charlie Yale and Ella Levy
co-editors-in-chief

We're lucky to have been students of *The Register*.

The story of our time at Central High School has been intertwined with our involvement in *The Register* since our freshman year.

Ella Levy: When signing up for freshman classes all I wanted to do was write. I signed up for every writing elective and luckily was placed in journalism. The following year, however, my interests had changed, and I did not sign up for the newspaper. Hillary Blayney, the former adviser, told me I had talent, and that newspaper was the right place for me, so I joined *The Register*.

Charlie Yale: I can't remember whether I selected Journalism 1-2 as an elective, or whether I was randomly placed into it during my first semester at Central. I knew that I wanted to join *The Register* thereafter. But – whatever happened – it became one of the most impactful classes that I will ever take.

EL: Charlie and I had freshman journalism together. When the class was online no one talked. When we switched to in-person, nothing changed. We were spread throughout the class and people were too far to talk to. But Charlie and I were already friends, so this didn't faze us. So instead of talking in class, we would text.

Even though we were very close, things always felt like a competition. We had the same number of articles published and always pushed to get the next one out before the other. I remember hearing his mom liked me because I pushed him to be better. But I also pushed Charlie into trouble, something his mom did not thank me for.

We skipped one of our journalism classes at the end of the year. I had skipped lunch earlier in the year and didn't get caught, so I assumed it was a fool proof plan. However, Charlie's mom asked about his reported absence, and he cracked immediately. The next day, Charlie confessed this to me in journalism, and our whole story was busted in front of our teacher. But she didn't care. I think she was more proud than concerned.

Over the next two years Charlie and I stayed out of trouble. In our roles, we contributed to the betterment of *The Register*. But Blayney would still be proud as we now have broken out of our shells as co-editors-in-chief. At the end of our tenure, we look back and understand the full importance of the experience that we've had.

CY: Now, as the co-editor of the paper alongside Ella, I realize the importance not only of journalism, but everything else that comes with being on the paper. On *The Register*, people need to learn to have difficult conversations and resolve conflicts. As a microcosm of a real-world publication, we face the same challenges as they do on a level attainable and understandable to high schoolers. As editors, we have pushed each other to be better in our respective areas of interest, not just for personal growth but for the growth of the publication. We reported not

only on issues affecting our school, but issues affecting Nebraska and the world to foster a more informed, engaged and active student body.

In the four years that we've been involved with *The Register*, we've faced backlash to articles, changes in editorships, legislative battles regarding our First Amendment freedoms, a new adviser and myriad other issues ranging from potential copyright infringement to faulty photo quality. We believe it is important for all students to have experiences like ours, where they face and overcome challenges and learn from their mistakes. Being on *The Register* was not only integral to our development as journalists, but our whole development as human beings.

So, as a part of our final message as editors, we want to encourage more students to get involved with *The Register*. Whether it is through your guest contributions or through an editorship of your own, you are contributing to student journalism during a fraught time for media across the world. By building this resilience, you become a part of a tradition that has lasted for nearly as long as Central itself and embodies the values that the building represents.



The Register's co-editors-in-chief Charlie Yale and Ella Levy pose outside of the Register classroom.

Student class elections entail problems

Iyanna Wise
staff writer

The senior class elections have been very competitive this year. Candidates campaigned every single day, posting images of their posters on social media and hanging posters in the courtyard. But, like other elections, there are some issues that should be addressed.

But first, how does the election work? There are two groups for voting: officers and representatives. The officers contain six positions: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, activities coordinator and historian. There are eight representative positions.

The only way you're able to run is if you have at least a 2.01 GPA or higher, no suspensions or expulsions, are on track to graduate and attend one of the few officer meetings to gain information on how to run. After the meeting, you must fill out the intent to run form that asks what position you're running for, a t-shirt design for the senior class and two activity ideas. Presidential candidates were also required to make a video to be displayed in the junior class Teams on the first voting day.

The students running for officer positions campaign first. They can only campaign until the day before the election, the results are said on the announcement and then representative elections begin. The only reason to be dismissed from running in the election is failure to complete the intent to run form, posting mean things about other candidates, bribery or anything else that's unethical.

But there were some issues with the election and its timeline.

The first thing was the lack of promotional time. There were four officer meetings between Thursday, April 4 and Friday, April 5, meaning the sooner you went to a meeting, the sooner you could campaign. Social media was a benefit as you could reach hundreds of people through one post. Candidates also reposted other campaigns.

For hanging up posters in person, the week of April 7 was terrible. Juniors had the ACT on April 9, no school on Friday, April 12, and no school Monday, April 15. That only left five days to campaign as voting began Saturday, April 13, and ended Tuesday, April 16. If students were barely at school, they couldn't see the signs for the election.

Adding onto that was the lack of locations to put up posters. The administrators created the rule that posters can only be hung up in the courtyard to save the walls from being damaged, which is understandable, but the election is important for both officers and representatives. These people will represent the senior class for a year, presidents even past that. There should be as many juniors as possible who hear about these elections, especially since not all students go in the courtyard every day. It would be more beneficial to open it up to places with equal foot traffic like the cafeteria, the gym, basement hallway and the new addition; this would allow more people to see them.

It could be as easy as bringing them up at the junior assemblies throughout the year or saying reminders on the daily announcements about deadlines. Waiting until the last day to talk about the election isn't beneficial as juniors think it is too late to run or vote.

On the students' part, it would be helpful to go around and talk to other junior classes, talking to their own classes and explain to people why it's important to vote. Not everyone has social media, so talking in person really connects with everyone.

Though everyone who ran in the election would be dedicated to the position they ran for, regardless of who won, there were still students who used their popularity as a tactic to gain votes.

This takes away opportunities for people who genuinely wanted that position but cannot get it because when elections are popularity contests, it's a power move.

It is really important for people to vote smart, not just for popularity reasons. The character, value and benefits these people will bring to the position should benefit the senior class as a whole, not just one person.



Photo Courtesy of BECCA ROCK

Photo Courtesy of NELL FARRINGTON

Living abroad brings blessings, loss

Fiona Bryant
opinion editor

When I tell people I lived in Germany for half a decade, I usually get an iteration of "you're so lucky" and "do you speak German?" I am, and I do! Sometimes they'll continue the conversation and ask why, when and for how long I lived there. I lived near Frankfurt, Germany from 2014 to 2019 for my dad's job with the U.S. government. Sometimes I'll be asked about my German abilities or if I can say something! Yes! Deine Mama liebt mich mehr als ich Kartoffeln liebe.

The topic usually arises after I can't think of a fun fact, or I have to explain that I wasn't at the 2017 solar eclipse. In fact, at the time of the 2017 solar eclipse, I hadn't been to the U.S. in three years.

There's immense joy in my experience living overseas, and it's undoubtedly shaped my personhood and cultural identity. Yet, the grief in the experience often feels overlooked.

I consider myself a third-culture kid, but being an overseas military or government service child is not always synonymous with that. Third-culture kids are defined as children who "are spending, or have spent, at least part of their childhood in at least one country and culture other than their own," by the founders of the term. They are united by a "third culture" of individuals with similar experiences with childhood mobility, being shaped by multiple cultures and not knowing where they are from.

I don't know where I would say I am from; I was born in Washington State, then moved to Kentucky, then back to Washington, then lived in Germany for five years, then moved here. Pretty much all of my family is American culturally and in terms of citizenship. For me, though, it's painful and puzzling to identify with an American culture that I have never fully known. I lived in the U.S. for six years as a little kid and my home life is mostly American, but what do I do with five years of living in a German neighborhood, making German friends, going to German summer camp?

Not all military or government service brats living overseas would identify as third-culture kids. There are varying levels of interaction with the host country's culture. I didn't live on the military bases like some of my friends, although I attended a Department of Defense school all five years. Five years without moving is also unusual in comparison to children of active military personnel on three-year assignments.

Army and Air Force bases are often fully functional "mini-Americas," as a German acquaintance once described it. You could stay on base or between bases for your entire assignment if you wanted to; that would be very understandable in a foreign country. The level of cultural exposure greatly depends on one's parents, so it's not accurate to say every military kid is a third-culture kid. Third-culture kids also aren't all military kids; the label is not job specific and can be closely related to idea of "cross-cultural kids," coined by the same founders of "third-culture kid".

Even with the ever-growing number of third-culture kids and other cross-cultural kids, finding community can prove difficult. My life story isn't comparable to those of refugees or immigrants, and Central has very few military brats. Even in my stand-in community of fellow language nerds (my best attempt at keeping my connection to my German identity alive in a city with not real German restaurants or cultural sites), I still feel my grief. My friends forget that I haven't always lived here because at the same time, I'm also American and can pick up a Nebraskan accent quickly. My attempts at explaining the grief of losing an entire way of life, of losing an entire country, of worrying I'm too American for Germans or too much of an outsider for my all-American classmate's falter.

Yes, I'm extremely lucky for the experience of living abroad, traveling, gaining a new language and cultural empathy. But there's also an everyday struggle of feeling like a traitor to a different part of myself no matter what I do. There's the grief of a whole world you can't easily

revisit: a food you can't eat, a holiday they're not celebrating in the US, a house you grew up in but won't enter again. There's the constant search for security you've lost after everyone left and you left everyone. There's the loss of memories your brain forgets in order to move forward. Then there's the fear I'll morph further into an all-American with every second that passes after 2019. There's a stab when I remember I'm not fully either.

There's privilege and usefulness in being a third-culture kid. I just wish the loss apparent in it all was recognized too.



The author in a Dirndl in Wiesbaden, Germany in 2018.

Photo Courtesy of SIENNA BRYANT

Standardized tests fail students

Katie Besancon
staff writer

The ACT and SAT are known as tests that prove a student's college readiness based on categories like science, math, English and reading. These tests, which are usually taken by juniors in the spring, are not adequate ways to measure a student's capabilities in the classroom.

Many students are not strong standardized test takers, myself included. It is a time full of stress and overthinking where everything that students have learned since freshman year is put into one test, and they are expected to remember it all.

Not to mention that the tests are supposed to be a way to compare students all over the country to each other and create a standard. What is not considered when creating that standard is that schools all over the country have different timelines in which they teach different subjects.

When taking the ACT or SAT, some students might have advantages over others due to learning curriculums and different material at various times. Certain students also have access to prep courses, creating an unlevel playing field for other students. This causes challenges in an accurate nationwide standard.

The United States's national standard must be determined in some way because it has been found, especially recently, that in some cities and states, it can be easier to earn an A versus others where it can be more challenging. This causes the letter reports or transcripts that you send to colleges not to hold as much weight as they used to across the country.

Throughout elementary and middle school in Nebraska, students, including all public school students, would take the NSCAS and the MAP tests. These standardized tests in mathematics and English language are taken annually in grades three through eight and once during

high school, per the U.S. News and World Report.

Why don't we continue those standardized tests in place of the ACT and SAT? While they were a dreaded week for students, they were customized to what the students were learning in that grade level and provided more real-time data on how students were learning that year.

Annual standardized testing would show the learning rate from freshman to senior year. After the final test senior year, the scores from the student's entire high school years would be combined for an average, essentially their ACT score. It would be an ACT, but for the grade you just completed rather than one test in your third year of high school.

While some states teach different content at different times, this new method would enable states to curate tests to what the students are or have learned that year. This would allow students nationwide to be set up for success.

Doing the yearly standardized testing would decrease the amount of stress and anxiety students feel toward their scores.

The ACT is cumulative material of over three years that students are expected to recall, some of which they may not have learned yet due to their school's curriculum. Yearly testing would enable students to feel more confident in themselves as the test is curated to what they have learned in that school year.

Additionally, their future would not be set on that one score. Since students would take it for four years, if they don't do well on one of them, their test score isn't completely trashed.

Overall, implementing a yearly standardized testing regimen versus a singular junior year standardized test would reduce anxiety and be more likely to improve scores among students while still being able to get a national standard.

The ACT and SAT aren't accurate ways to prove a student's capabilities, but yearly testing can be.

Bathroom behavior disrupts use

Brayden Simpson
staff writer

Trying to find a usable restroom is becoming harder and harder at Central. On several occasions in the last few months, I have found myself wandering the halls for periods longer than 10 minutes, hoping to stumble upon a bathroom with open, functioning stalls. I've hiked up to four floors in one trip and gotten nothing. This kind of inaccessibility cannot go on. Something must be done.

The lack of available stalls is due largely to student activity. About 50% of the issues, I have run into when looking for an open restroom are clogged toilets. They have been stuffed full of assorted garbage, vape cartridges and toilet paper, overflowing with wet trash. I have no idea what compels students to do this. I imagine it is seen as a joke, but it's hard to find the humor in it when you desperately need to use the restroom. It's also immensely wasteful and causes unnecessary work for custodial staff.

Really, there are trash cans right outside, why must the chip bags go in the toilet? Sometimes, this clogging results in leaking as well, causing toilet water to spill onto the floor and form large puddles, making entire restrooms incredibly dirty and uncomfortable, if not unusable.

Some stalls are occupied by students skipping class, although this is less of a problem. While attendance issues are prevalent, skippers do not create as much of an impediment to other students as those who destroy the bathrooms. If they are taking up a stall, most are kind enough to leave when asked. Smoking and vaping are issues to be sure, but ultimately the effects of students loitering in the bathroom are not as lasting as those of restroom vandalism.

Other stalls are unavailable for genuine maintenance reasons. I've encountered stalls without doors as well as permanently closed ones which have simply been out of order for months. And of course, the new addition and gender-neutral bathrooms remain locked most of the day.

These factors limit the ability of students to simply use the restroom. With only two stalls in each men's bathroom, I find that at least one of the two is usually compromised by fourth block. With only one stall available in each, bathrooms are more quickly occupied, and students who cannot find a stall are forced to wander even longer. This takes time away from class and is, of course, unhealthy and uncomfortable for students.

It's hard to determine how to stop this kind of

behavior. Obviously, we can't just lock up all the bathrooms like we did with the new addition. Limiting the number of available restrooms further would only worsen the situation. And it's difficult to effectively prevent student vandalism since it cannot be predicted or traced easily. Furthermore, we can't rely on custodians to clean it up immediately; they do enough work around the school as is, including unclogging the garbage from the toilets after hours. Really, I don't know what can be done by administration or teachers. Bathroom sweeps, which may clear the restrooms periodically, cannot prevent students from going into and trashing them during the block. And too much security could raise privacy concerns. Their efforts are clear, but still there exists a problem.

So instead, I'd like to appeal to the students at Central High School: please act your age. This is ridiculous. People need to use the restrooms – don't keep them from doing so. The short-term humor of vandalizing toilets is quickly outweighed by the struggles faced by students every day. If consequences cannot effectively prevent this behavior, I hope that perhaps empathy will. Think, for just a second, about who might be affected by your choices in the bathroom. Our school community cannot afford to suffer these immature pranks forever. Please, consider others before you do something stupid.



This toilet in the boy's bathroom, among others, has faced vandalism.

Future of AI often misunderstood

Ethan Hughes
staff writer

You have almost certainly heard of ChatGPT and similar programs. These AI chat bots take a prompt from the user and use available data on the internet to produce responses. There are a lot of misconceptions around these bots, including how they work and what they mean for society. So, I'm here to help debunk them and tell you the real answers.

1. "Chat bots make their answers out of nothing."

Well, no. That's not true. These bots do not produce sentences from nothing. Instead, every response and piece of dialogue is a mashup of different sentences found on the internet and stored data cobbled together into a legible response. They do this by taking the input (the sentence you put in) and running it through every single other piece of data they have in order to produce an output (the sentence it sends back).

2. "Chat bots are becoming intelligent."

Also no. This one is honestly just a misunderstanding of chat bots becoming more advanced. The "learning systems" that AI undergo are not as simple as just telling them facts. One example is a kind of deep learning (essentially, telling

an AI whether it's right or wrong when identifying an image) where several bots are made at random, then tested on, say, recognizing characters in an image. They are scored, the best performing bots are kept, and the rest are discarded. Then, more bots are made based on the best performers. Rinse and repeat.

3. "AI are becoming alive, like Hal 9000 or The Terminator."

No. They aren't. That's not how AI works. AI, as we understand it, cannot live like Hal 9000 or make fully independent choices. As we currently understand AI, to become alive, it would have to be able to create data without some basis, which currently just isn't possible. If that were to somehow happen, it would be decades in the future, at least.

4. "This is gonna steal our jobs!"

Eh, yes and no. It is entirely possible that fields like TV writing will be dominated by AI in the not-so-distant future, which is awful. However, basically no one else is in trouble, because AI are super specialized, and importantly, limited to only what a human can physically build. Your average factory worker will not have their job replaced within the next two

decades, most likely. People like security workers and those in the military are completely safe. While this isn't great for creative workers (in fact it's terrible for us), it's not the "oh-my-God-AI-job-apocalypse" that some people think it might be.

5. "AI becoming more advanced can only be a bad thing."

This is a debatable sentence, because once again, only kind of. While AI becoming more advanced is bound to take its toll on creative industries like movies, it's actually super useful for other things. Some examples include organization, inventory planning, optimization of stock in stores and websites. This also includes everyone's favorite – personalized advertising, which is actually a decently old phenomenon (and is undeniably effective). But some more important examples include scanning financial transactions for fraud, cross-comparing symptoms and autonomous vehicles. And while these things aren't perfect and do make mistakes, there are absolutely benefits to AI becoming more advanced. In school settings, there aren't many uses that are directly relevant (aside from the popular use of AI to write essays, which I don't recommend).

New wardrobe every summer proves unnecessary

Millie Jackson
staff writer

In a world of fast fashion, summer trends beckon us to constantly refresh our wardrobes. This cycle fuels overconsumption and harms the environment. By embracing timeless style over passing trends, we can reduce waste and make a positive impact.

There are countless new styles constantly surrounding the beginning of summer. Over the past years, we have had new summer trends like coconut girl style, coastal granddaughter, coastal cowboy, VSCO girl and so many more. Each trend goes along with a certain wardrobe that is a total "must have" for summer.

Yes, the newest trendy way to dress for the upcoming season is an exciting topic, but is a new style each year really something we need? Fast fashion companies like Shein, Zara, H&M and more release huge amounts of new styles each year to compensate for these quick-moving trends. According to Business Insider, Shein releases 6,000 new styles in just one day, and Zara makes 450 million garments a year.

With these ridiculous numbers of garments produced, there are inevitably huge amounts being thrown out, especially with fast-paced trend cycles. According to PIRG, an environmental research group, 30% of all clothes made around the world are never sold, and the fashion industry is responsible for 10 percent of global carbon emissions.

Social media has a huge impact on trend cycles, especially as different seasons start and end. Just scrolling through TikTok, you are destined to see many videos along the lines of "Hey, what's everyone wearing this summer?" or "just watched a TikTok dissing baby tees, and I literally just stocked up. What am I supposed to do now?" There are also tons of videos pushing "summer essentials" or "what's hot this summer." It's easy to get swept up in these trends all

over social media, but let's not forget about their environmental impact.

Shein has already begun to sell all the newest items spreading through social media. Posts claiming that "tankinis are the new bikinis" are already leading to hundreds of tankini styles on their website.

The best way to go about trying to adapt to the ever-changing fashion world is to just not. Choosing to wear what you feel comfortable in should always be a top priority. No, you don't have to feel guilty about following a few trends every now and then, but being conscious of your impact is key. Before making a purchase, think, "Would I wear this if it wasn't trending?" If the answer is no, then maybe reconsider.

If you have already participated in a trend that you no longer love, there are plenty of ways to deal with unwanted clothing sustainably. Start with reimagining the piece. Ask questions like, "Is there a different way I can wear this?" You could get the clothing altered or dye/make a design on it that may encourage you to wear it more often. If none of these alterations appeal to you, donating or selling is a great option. Platforms like Depop, Poshmark, Ebay and more allow you to sell unwanted clothing online. Resell stores like Plato's Closet are great spots if you still want to make some money off your clothing. You could also consider donating to places like Goodwill or homeless and women's shelters.

When donating or selling clothes anywhere, keep in mind what will sell. Clothes in poor condition will often just end up in the garbage if they don't sell within a certain time range. If you have clothes in bad condition, you can repurpose them. Some fabrics make good rags, and others can be used for patchwork or other designs. There are endless ways to repurpose old clothing.



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Trader Joe's snacks: buss or bust?



Trader Joe's snacks, reviewed for what to try and avoid, sit on a dining room table.

STEVEN DICKERSON | The Register

Steven Dickerson
staff writer

Venturing into the world of tight parking spaces and crazy minivan moms, Trader Joe's offers a wide variety of snack foods. Setting out on a quest, I tried 15 snacks to see if they were a certified buss or a bust.

1. Rosemary Croissant Croutons. While some may say croutons aren't a snack, these ones should count. These flaky, croissant-like croutons were buttery, airy, and very flavorful with many well-chosen seasonings. They were great for salads, had a fantastic crunch and had a satisfying texture. They also worked just eating them straight out of the bag. These croutons were a certified buss.

2. Strawberry Soft Licorice Twists. These strawberry twists were a spectacular, fruity snack that can serve as both an appetite pleaser and a dessert. While the texture was harder than normal, they tasted far more authentic and didn't have that synthetic taste that other licorice tends to have. These strawberry soft licorice twists are a certified buss.

3. Many Things Snack Mix. This snack mix containing spicy and regular cereal squares (Chex), pretzels, peanuts, bread chips, and corn sticks tasted okay. The spicy Chex did not blend well with the other ingredients like the honey flavors of the peanuts and regular Chex nor with the saltiness of the pretzels and bread chips. Too many flavors were competing at once, and while I am a fan of sweet and spicy mixes, this snack mix just did not work, making it a bust.

4. Joe O's Cereal Bars. These peanut butter cereal bars are a great midday snack. The mix of the sweet coating on the peanuts, the savory peanut butter and the added salt created a melting pot of flavors that tasted absolutely fantastic. These bars are a certified buss.

5. PB&J Wafers and Dip. This snack pack pair included a raspberry jam dip and peanut butter filled wafers. While they tasted fine together, it was quite messy. The wafers broke apart the second I touched them, and even trying to dip them in the jam was difficult. While I eventually got a bite with both together, it was not ideal for something that should be convenient and quick to eat; after all it is a snack. These reasons lead me to say that these were a bust.

6. Elote Corn Chip Dippers. These chips were some of the best things to ever touch my tongue. The ungodly amount of seasoning on these street corn inspired chips was perfect to satisfy my taste buds. They had a kick of chipotle and a hint of heat that pairs well with pico de gallo, guacamole and queso. Elote corn chip dippers are a certified buss.

7. Roasted and Salted Whole Cashews. These were just plain and simple cashews. As a cashew fan, I loved the amount of salt included on these. They were a perfect, convenient snack that tasted great, making these a certified buss.

8. Mini Cheese Sandwich Crackers. Mimicking the Ritz crackers with cheese filling, the Trader Joe's version takes a more organic route. While not as salty as the generic brands, these offered a good cheese filling that did not taste like straight plastic. These addictive crackers with filling are for sure a certified buss.

9. These Sprinkles Walk into a Sandwich Cookies. These cookies that included a sprinkle filled crème filling tasted great. They had spectacular sweetness and cute decoration with the heavy number of sprinkles. However, they were very thick, crumbly, and far too hard to eat in one bite. Despite lacking in convenience and cleanliness, these were for sure a certified buss.

10. Tiniest Chocolate Chip Cookies. These ultra-tiny cookies had the standard flavor of chocolate chip cookies and did taste well. However, they were boring and had no sense of uniqueness to them other than the fact that they were so small they could easily fall out of your hand. Because of this, these are a bust.

11. Hold the Cone Mini Waffle Cone Tips. These viral waffle cone tips filled with delicious, smooth dark chocolate were a great snack and dessert. They were small enough to be convenient and they had a great crunch. These are a certified buss.

12. Mini (Almost) Everything but the Bagel Sandwich Crackers with Cream Cheese Filling. These crackers were not the best. They had a very funky smell and texture to them. The cracker was crunchy and seasoned well but the poppy seeds baked into the cracker just didn't

work well. The filling tasted bad because they tried to replicate cream cheese which just isn't possible to do in a processed filling. These were a bust.

13. Everything but the Bagel Seasoned Bite Size Crackers. These chips, that stay on the everything bagel tasting route, were crunchy and offered quite a bit of flavor. Looking for a rebound from the everything crackers with filling, these did not carry the foul smell as the filling filled snack. Nonetheless, texture was again an issue as the poppy seeds were not well baked into the crackers and it just hurts your teeth, making it a bust.

14. Chili and Lime Rolled Corn Tortilla Chips. Trader Joe's version of Takis pleasantly surprised me. They were spicy enough to fulfill the heat necessary for a hot chip, yet the lemon zest flavor was still tastefully evident and complimented it well. They were quite crispy, tangy and fit any situation where I needed a snack well, making it a certified buss.

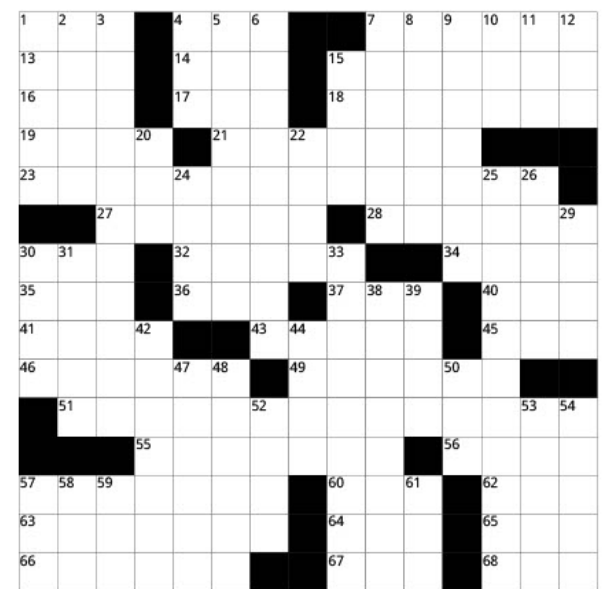
15. Cinnabon Bun Joe-Joes. Trader Joe's take on Oreos, Joe-Joes, are delicious as they are. But these limited-edition cinnamon bun flavored ones taste like heaven. The graham cracker taste of the cookies was delectable and harmonized with the sweet, churro-like crème filling well. These work well as both a snack and a dessert and they're a certified buss.

ACROSS

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5 Princess Diana's family name
6 BBC rival
7 "No CPR" order, sometimes tattooed
8 Roman magistrate
9 ___-Cola
1 Cream-filled pastries
3 Opp. of "nothing mean"
7 Sacred beetle
8 Sound system
0 Boy king
2 Brainy bunch
4 Drench
5 Buckeyes' sch.
6 "Wait a ___!"
7 "Notorious" justice
0 Golfer's goal
1 Paul of "Ant-Man" and "Clueless"
3 Fragrant compound
5 Document that guarantees originality
6 Melodic passage
9 Florence ruling family
1 54D + 1D + 23A + X = ?
5 "Popeye" cartoonist

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60 ___ in Charlie
62 Fall behind
63 Red hot chili pepper
64 Response to an oversharer
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66 Take care of
67 Equinox mo.
68 Frat. counterpart



- 30 ___ Bora: Afghan region
31 Take by force
33 Relics
38 Mattress supporter
39 Young eel
42 Provided for, as a widow
44 Self-satisfied
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The Central High School cheer team tryouts were in the last week of March, and it was a highly anticipated one.

Fun activities to do this summer

Ella Levy
co-editor-in-chief

Summer is all about freedom. But with so much free time it can be easy to lose track of time and waste it. Here are some summer activities to make sure your summer is worthwhile.

Go to a body of water

Most spend their summer at the pool. And while the pool can be a great time, it gets repetitive. I suggest visiting a lake or going camping with a body of water nearby.

Try a new sport

Pickleball and tennis are easy to pick up and play for an afternoon. Roller skating or rollerblading can be done downtown at Gene Leahy Mall.

Make a summer vlog

Throughout the summer record you and your friends! You could do one second a day, film crossing everything off your summer bucket list, or just film when you and your friends hang out.

Arcade night

Spend the night playing games and having some competitive fun with friends or family.

Photo scavenger hunt

Make a list of things to find and split into teams. You and your friends have an hour to find and take a picture of as many things on the list as you can.

Watch the sunrise/sunset

Alone or with friends, watching the sunrise or sunset can be so peaceful. Grab a blanket and your favorite spot and go watch the sky.

Escape room

Spend the afternoon or evening with family or friends going through clues and solving mysteries to escape. It can be a fun way to stretch your brain.

Go for a hike

Hikes can be so peaceful any time of day with company or by yourself. You can do multiple hikes this summer and try different paths and locations.

Yoga

Yoga is good for the mind and body. It's a good way to start or end the day. Try going with a friend and getting breakfast after or do it at home before bed.

Kickball slip n slide

Cool off on a hot day with some kickball. Play kickball with some friends but use Slip 'N Slides to connect the bases.

Activities to do during a picnic

Becca Rock
staff writer

Spring is here: birds are singing, the grass is turning green and the flowers are blooming. This time of year, is perfect to get out a quilt or a blanket and have a picnic. Lay in the sun and embrace Earth's natural beauty after the long harsh winter we have endured.

Here is a list of 16 things to do during a picnic.

EAT FOOD: Sandwiches, watermelon, strawberries, blueberries, muffins, or baguettes are just a few of the options. Or make it fancy: maybe you would want to go to Canes or another fast-food restaurant and bring them to the picnic.

Watch the sunrise/ sunset. Just think how beautiful this would be, enjoying the orange and pink tones in the sky. It is an amazing sight.

Picnic by the lake. Go to Lake Cunningham or Lake Zorinsky and get some friends together and enjoy each other's company.

Bring a deck of cards or board games. Picture this, an intense game of monopoly on a warm spring evening, at a picnic. You are not only enjoying nature, but you have a fun activity to go along with it.

Painting/ Coloring. Either by yourself or with a friend or two, do some fun art. You can take inspiration from the trees and the breeze around you.

Reading. Are you finishing a novel, maybe a mystery, a classic? Reading in a calm space with the sun is breathtaking; you should try it! But make sure you bring sunglasses so you can read the pages!

People watching. Some people may think this is creepy, but I disagree. You are admiring the people around you. Maybe it's the old man on a stroll, a child learning how to ride a bike or watching people fly kites. People are so interesting; we need to take a step back and realize everyone is living a unique experience.

Hammocking. Embrace your outdoor self and invest in a hammock. It is a relaxing way to spend a lazy afternoon and reconnect with yourself and nature.

Company with a pet. Most people take their dogs on walks, but what about sitting with your pet at a park, or in your front yard?

Fly a kite. The kid in you wants to fly a kite. Pick up one from Target, Walmart, or the Dollar Store, and watch your childhood dreams fly into the sky.

Hike and then picnic. Pack a few sandwiches in your bag and take to the hills. Admire the bull frogs in creeks and the high-flying birds. When you get to the point that you need a break: sit down on a branch, the forest floor, or find a table and munch down.

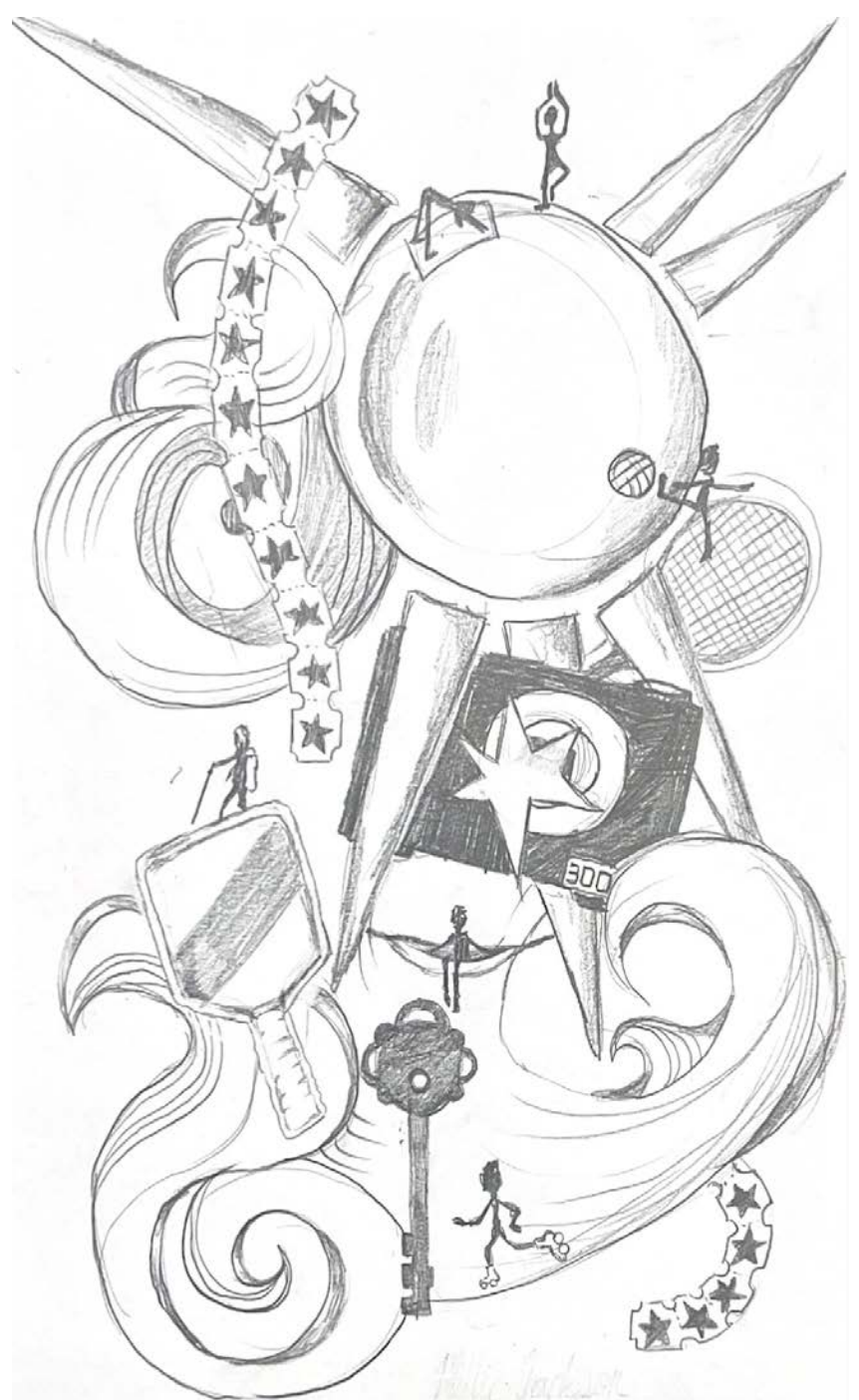
Journaling. Reflecting on your past week or even looking into the future is one way to stay calm in the busy finals season just around the corner. Being in the calm environment provided by birds and the breeze is one way to start a diary entry.

Crocheting/ Knitting. Pick up a new hobby: learn to crochet or knit or continue with these skills and make cool new creations.

Cloud Watching. "I see a baby in the sky" "NO! That looks like a walrus."

Homework. Take a break from the indoors and take your studying into the wild. Just kidding but relocating to do a homework picnic session in the park can help break up the stressful times of studying and homework.

Bird Watching. Last but certainly not least, do as my grandfather would. Get some binoculars and zoom in to watch the life of a bird.



MILLIE JACKSON | The Register

Summer music festivals in line for August

Ella Shafer
contributing writer

With the infamous two-weekend long Coachella music festival done, concertgoers get ready for the musical events happening this summer. Festivals like Lollapalooza, Hangout, Governors Ball and many more events. As well as artists' tours which are sure to bring excitement for those wanting to see their favorite music live.

Central students don't need to commit to an eight-hour drive to larger festivals like Lollapalooza in order to have a good time, as there are lots of closer music events that are in, or around Nebraska.

Outlandia is a two-day music festival at Falconwood Park, in Bellevue Neb. featuring artists like The Flaming Lips, and Men I Trust on Friday (Aug. 9), and The Revivalists on Saturday (Aug. 10). Tickets are still available on their website for fans that are interested in going!

Similarly, Hinterland Music Festival, going from Aug. 2-4 is at the Avenue of the Saints Amphitheater, in Saint Charles, Iowa. Headliners for the three days include popular artists Hozier, Vampire Weekend and Noah Kahan.

Other performers like Ethel Cain (Aug. 4), Chappell Roan (Aug. 4), The Last Dinner Party (Aug. 3), Hippo Campus (Aug. 2) and Lizzy McAlpine (Aug. 3) are also featured on the lineup.

If you're not looking for a whole weekend event, there are a lot of solo artists and bands performing throughout the summer as well.

Jack Antonoff's band Bleachers is performing at the Steelhouse, in downtown Omaha, on their From the Studio to the Stage tour. They are performing May 22, and doors will be opened at 6:30 p.m.

The Waiting Room is a smaller venue that many artists will perform at this summer such as Maddie Zamm, as well as hosting other events like "Taylor Fest".

"I'm excited for all the new music coming to Omaha and shows at the Waiting Room because I feel like I have recently discovered lots of really cool bands," sophomore Sienna Maskin said.

During the summer months, teenage bands have the opportunity to showcase their talent at bigger venues. Sophomore Izzy Worden is in the Redwoods band and is excited to perform this summer saying, "The hiatus of bigger music festivals occur in puts the much-needed spotlight on smaller artists."

When asked about other music events to look out for, Worden emphasized her excitement for The Marker of Blues, which is at the beginning of August in downtown Omaha.

The 10 best summer songs

Steven Dickerson
staff writer

As we approach the wonderful months of summer, we often switch up the music we listen to in order to match the sunny, easy-going vibes that accompany summer. Here are the 10 best summer songs of all time that you should listen to this summer, based on the criteria used for what makes a good summer song.

We'll start with the criteria, which are quite basic. First, a good summer song should have an addicting, vibrant beat, the kind that races through your head constantly. A beat that is created with bright-sounding instruments, like trumpets, electric guitars, drums and synths, fits summer songs very well.

Secondly, it should have catchy or memorable lyrics, ones that you would randomly blurt out when hanging out with friends or lyrics you would scream out the window of a car on the highway -- songs with words that go together and tell a story.

Finally, it should be a song that works in many different summer-esque settings. The song should be compatible with all summer situations, like the pool. Without this versatility, a summer song fails to have the same level of broad excitement.

Now, to the list of songs that best fit these criteria, in no particular order.

1: "Sundress" by A\$AP Rocky. This two-minute, 38-second psychedelic pop song might be one of the best songs created in general and fits the ideal summer song, thanks to its brightness. The song samples Tame Impala's 2010 combination pop-rock song "Why Won't You Make Up Your Mind," a great song in its own right. However, Rocky rocked this sample by using his unexpectedly calm, soothing vocals over its repetitive rhythm. The vocals are spectacular and the lyrics addicting; in them, Rocky describes his love for Rihanna. The song also includes a small portion of rap, which is Rocky's typical genre, and adds a nice trap feeling that satisfies his usual song style. It is a creative masterpiece that perfectly encapsulates a great summer song.

2: "Hood Gone Love It" by Jay Rock and Kendrick Lamar. Fans of the video game "Grand Theft Auto: Five" might recognize this marvelous rap song, as it is featured in the game and its many trailers. Rock and Lamar as a duo means that whatever comes out of the studio is about to bless your ears (the duo created the very popular song "Money Trees" as well). This song is one that does a fantastic job of a song you'd hear in the background when waking up on a beautiful, hot June morning where the birds are chirping. It's exactly what Rock and Lamar wanted from the song lyrics, which describe what summers were like when they were growing up in Compton, California. The four-minute, five-second song samples the 1974 song "Easy Days" by The Pointer Sisters. They sampled it very well, using the 1974 song's intro as their own intro and then the background mix to their song. Overall, it's a great summer song that deserves at least a brief listen.

3: "Sweet Talk" by Saint Motel. This three-minute, 12-second song is an indie pop song that can easily excite. Its interestingly diverse use of brass instruments, clapping and addictive guitar riffs create an image of coastal waters and a sandy beach. The comforting vocals tell a love story that focuses on appreciating the little things. The wonderful instrumental and touching lyrics help cement "Sweet Talk" as a summer song staple that warrants a listen.

4: "Latch" by Disclosure and Sam Smith. Perhaps one of the most recognizable songs for Generation Z, "Latch" peaked at number seven on the Billboard Hot 100 back in August 2014. Since then, the song has been popularized even more thanks to its versatile style of dance-pop/house music that can be played in many settings like clubs, workplaces, cars and pools. The groove of the song just makes you want to move. The chorus is a captivating and immersive experience featuring changes in beats and impressive synth work. The lyrics, performed by a pre-decline Smith, describe what it feels like to be obsessed with others and figuratively

latching to them. "Latch" isn't just a song; it's an experience, one that many will be guaranteed to scream loudly when their windows are down this summer.

5: "Favorite Song" by Chance the Rapper and Childish Gambino (Donald Glover). The three-minute, five-second stimulating, tropical-vibe rap song from 2013 samples the 1971 song "Clean Up Woman" by Betty Wright perfectly. Chance's exciting tenor vocals combined with Glover's catchy rapping create memorable lyrics that you could randomly recite. The beat can be described as nothing short of astounding, and it's a song that works in many situations and makes you feel like the main character. The vocals, the melody, and its versatility all accurately match the characteristics of an extraordinary summer song, showing why "Favorite Song" will really be one of your favorite songs this summer.

6: "Champagne Coast" by Blood Orange. With the word "coast" being in the song title and the album it's on being named "Coastal Grooves," it's not too difficult to see why this four-minute, 52-second new wave/indie song is well suited for summer. The song's relaxed, repetitive chorus, lyrics, and tempo allow for daydreaming of being at a beach on the West Coast to run wild. Its calming lyrics that tell a story of a budding romance add to the lovely aura. The light, hummed guitar sound of the chorus makes you feel like you're in a coming-of-age movie and elicits rolling your windows down and blasting at full volume. Give this song a listen this summer if you are looking for an addicting song to pair the vibes of summer.

7: "Trap Queen" by Fetty Wap. This outrageously popular rap song, which peaked at number two on the Billboard Hot 100 in mid-2015, offers year-round energy. However, the lyrics and the vibes make it a thrilling summer song. Wap's infectious vocals make it hard not to scream the lyrics about his love life. Its chorus matches the feeling of a great summer party where everyone is having fun and energy is sky-high. The ability of "Trap Queen" to fit many situations, like motivation for working out or hosting a pool party, only adds to its credentials as a summer banger. It's hard to imagine summer without hearing its hooking beat and easily memorable adlibs. Give "Trap Queen" a listen this summer, even if it's indulging in its greatness by hearing it blasting from another car stereo nearby.

8: "Doses and Mimosas" by Cherub. This five-minute, 23-second electronic pop song from 2013 has a beat that captures the essence of summer. While the lyrics may not tell the greatest story, and the vocals sound a little autotuned, this song is one that deserves to be yelled at the top of your lungs. The chorus is vibrant and includes an ecosystem of instruments that come together in perfect harmony to create a wonderful sound that blesses your ears. MTV called it a "bouncy summer jam," a description exemplified by the beachy scenes of the music video, which has 65 million views on YouTube.

9: "Electric Love" by BØRNS. This 2014 electronic pop song is one of the most enthusiastic, colorful songs you will ever hear, flawlessly fitting what summer is. The song is very high intensity, with stunning hooks and killer riffs that make you want to dance and scream. The vocals are great and tell a wonderful love story. "Electric Love" is perfect for warm summer nights of any occasion and merits a spot on all summer song playlists.

10: "Heatstroke" by Calvin Harris, Young Thug, Pharrell Williams and Ariana Grande. This three-minute, 49-second funk song is unlike anything you've ever heard. Peaking at 96 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 2017, this song combines all the elements of a great summer song. The cohesive vocals of Thug, Williams and Grande add to the bright imagery of tanning on a beach. Harris' beat is astronomically hooking and will get your attention for its hip-hop, dance, pop, and funk elements, along with its diverse use of instruments. The song can mold into any situation well, whether it's at a club, a beach or a gym. Harris tweeted in 2017 that the song was designed and produced specifically to make you feel incredible. This summer, add "Heatstroke" to your playlist and elevate your happy vibes.

Best summer books

Fiona Bryant
opinion editor

Summertime is beaten by only thunderstorm weather as the most atmospheric time of the year to read. Books can be enjoyed in hammocks, by the pool, or just lying in the grass and soaking up the warmth. I always save my lovable summer Young Adult romances for when school gets out, just to feel the summer breeze in my hammock as the characters do too.

Summer can also get restless or boring without friends and school drama. I take summer as a time to catch up on my yearly reading goal and glide through a few shelves of books for entertainment. Even enjoying just one book on a rainy day, during a road trip, or to have a book to talk about when your English teacher asks makes a lovely addition to your summer. Listen to them on audiobook, use them for a library summer reading challenge, or buddy read them with a friend! The following are recommended as some of the best books I've read with a summer setting or an otherwise engaging, lighthearted plot.

Best (Young Adult) Summer Romances:

"The Falling in Love Montage" by Ciara Smyth . Available at the Omaha Public Library.

One of my favorite YA romances, "The Falling in Love Montage" is addicting with its riveting love interest and plot full of summer dates. Saoirse and Ruby meet at a party (chasing a kitten) at the start of their summer before university. They're both interested in each other, but with tragedy looming over Saoirse and a guaranteed split at the end of the summer, neither believes in starting a relationship. They then embark on a summer of fake dating to fulfill all their hopeless romantic dreams and to help Saoirse contend with her breakup. The separation at the end of the season seems simple but a lot happens that summer.

"Ander & Santi Were Here" by Jonny Garza Villa. Available at the Central and Omaha Public Libraries.

Again, one of my favorite YA romances in existence, "Ander & Santi" is less of a beach read but still infused with vivid food descriptions, undying love, and summer heat. I loved this book for its vividness all around; it fully immerses you in the love story of Ander, a nonbinary budding muralist, and Santi, a Mexican immigrant who is undocumented, as they navigate love forbidden by circumstance.

Best Summer Series:

"The Clique" series by Lisi Harrison. Available at the Omaha Public Library.

Also, the best pick for trashy summer reading, "The Clique" series is a gem for readers who love aimless drama, rich people problems and fashion. I only made my way through six of the 14 books last summer, but each one is easy to pick up and finish in a few sittings. The clique is a group of five middle school girls attending a luscious private school in upstate New York. The series follows Claire's attempts to be "in" with the clique, and their various middle school crushes, shopping trips and adventures on the new iMac. I read them for the 2000s nostalgia, which is coming back!

"The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants" series by Ann Brashares. Available at the Omaha Public Library.

For a more mature, less trashy, but still very 2000s series, "The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants" follows four best friends at the cusp of adulthood and a series of memorable summers, all united by the Traveling Pants. One pair of thrift store jeans magically fits all four perfectly and becomes a lucky charm travelling between the girls throughout the summer. In the jeans, the girls experience first loves, travel to Greece, grow into themselves and ultimately revel in the beauty of their lifelong friendship.

Best Quick Reads:

"Mexican Whiteboy" by Matt de la Peña. Available at the Central and Omaha Public Libraries.

Only around 250 pages, "Mexican Whiteboy" follows Danny Lopez, the son of a white mother and a Mexican-American father, as he spends his summer with his father's family, sharpening his prodigious baseball talent. Yet, the novel ultimately explores Danny's unexpected and bittersweet friendship with a neighbor and contends with the different lives each boy will lead.

"This One Summer" by Jillian and Mariko Tamaki. Available at the Central and Omaha Public Libraries.

Graphic novels can also make a quick read, but "This One Summer" has enough plot to mull over for the entire summer. Rose and Windy go to Awabo Beach every summer; however, this summer promises the girls a glimpse into adulthood and adult problems. It captures the confusion and longing of adolescence perfectly, with the secrets of growing up coming into reach.

Best Book to Keep You Occupied:

"Middlesex" by Jeffrey Eugenides. Available at the Omaha Public Library.

Not only is this book over 500 pages, but it also spans almost a century of a family's history and decisions culminating in the birth of Cal. Readers follow Cal's grandparents' love story and emigration from Greece. Then, after facing America as immigrants in 1920s, Cal's parents and their lives of military service and hot dog franchises in the 1960s are introduced. The remaining portion of the novel details Cal's childhood and discovery that made the entire family history relevant. The book will fill your summer with the sheer amount of information to absorb, but the characters are dynamic and propel the story.

Best Book to be Your Only Read This Summer:

"The View Was Exhausting" by Mikaella Clements and Onjali Datta. Available at the Omaha Public Library.

I recommend "The View Was Exhausting" to classmates who want to get back into reading or are occasional readers and want the book they choose to be worth it. A Hollywood romance, the novel has parallels to the shipping (thinking two individuals would make a good couple) and eventual romance of Zendaya and Tom Holland. Fictional actors Win and Leo are constantly shipped together, so they use it to their advantage in an addictive story full of the juiciest parts of Hollywood and years of romantic tension.

Best Book to Cool You Off with Tears:

"More Happy Than Not" by Adam Silvera. Available at the Omaha Public Library.

Silvera is known for "They Both Die at the End," but his best work lies in his earlier works like "More Happy Than Not." Aaron Soto lives in the Bronx and expects his summer to be as he always remembers it being: ample time with his girlfriend, running around the apartment buildings with his buddies and finding time to heal from his father's suicide. Looming in the background is a new, dystopian memory-erasing procedure. In the end, his summer reveals more about his past, his feelings about his friend Thomas, and himself, than Aaron ever could have imagined.

'Monkey Man' makes action movies cool again

Brayden Simpson
staff writer

"Monkey Man" is an explosive directorial debut for Dev Patel. The actor's first feature length project released in theaters on April 5, 2024, to overwhelming positive criticism and a profit of around 22 million dollars. It's an incredibly impressive work, especially considering Patel's role as both director and lead actor. The film, which was produced by Jordan Peele's Monkeypaw Productions, is a gritty, exhilarating thrill ride of a revenge story, full of some of the best action sequences in recent history. While the overarching plot sometimes fell by the wayside, I did not mind at all as I was thrust into a world of bright lights and gore. It's one of the most exciting films I've seen in a while, and Patel shows great promise as a director.

Dev Patel shines as the star of this film. Many have been quick to call this movie "Indian 'John Wick'" due to basic plot similarities, but Patel's character "Kid" separates the two dramatically. Unlike John Wick, Kid is poor and not a trained killer. Still, he manages to deceive and bargain his way to vengeance, and once confronted by his enemies, he pulls off kills which make the Russian hitman's tactics look like child's play. It helps that Dev Patel is a better actor than Keanu Reeves - his performance elevates every fight sequence, and he's so charming when he's not stomping someone's teeth in. "Monkey Man" does reflect "John Wick" in its dimly lit, long-take action sequences, but I found them much more engaging and creative in terms of choreography and cinematography. Kid is not always prepared for the fights he enters, but his adaptability keeps the viewer on their toes at all times. It's truly thrilling.

The environment created throughout the entirety of the movie is absolutely electric. The first half hour of the movie is dedicated entirely to building tension, and it succeeds. Long takes and shaky cam are utilized to capture the bustle of the city surrounding Kid's daily routine. The lighting inside the fight clubs and brothels where he exacts his revenge set the grim mood, with low visibility except for the occasional glint of metal and the flash of eyes. One of my favorite scenes was an early fight in the underground Tiger's Temple fighting ring.

The lights were low and yellow, and there was so much dust in the air you could see it under every beam. It was perfect at conveying the environment of lowbrow entertainment and the grime of the city away from the corrupt elite. On the other hand, the nightclubs Kid eventually finds himself in are even more disgusting for their cleanliness and opulence. The music also helps to enrich the environment. Jed Kurzel's score is intense and pulsing, driving every action scene with a steady beat, and fights are backed by fast-paced Indian hip hop which adds even more excitement.

Easily the weakest part of the film is the plot. With so much time spent on long battles and breakneck chases, there's not much room for exposition or intricate plot points. Still, I didn't mind. "Monkey Man" opts for a rather simple revenge story, feeding you Kid's motivation in small spurts throughout and never telling you more than you need to know. I delighted in not having to remember more than a few key facts. Some-

times, films do not have to be super complex. That's not to say the movie has nothing to say, though. Themes of class disparity as well as government corruption are present throughout. The film critiques those who abuse their power and allow the less fortunate to suffer for their own personal gain. It addresses police violence and religion as a tool for manipulation. It also features a group of marginalized trans women who help Kid revolt against the unjust system they exist in. "Monkey Man" seems less focused on telling a specific, detailed story than highlighting several real-world problems and showcasing some killer fights.

I thoroughly enjoyed "Monkey Man." The creative choices made by Patel and his team set it apart from other modern action movies and make it a must-see for any action fans. It oozes cool and is fun for anyone, whether they want to pick apart the movie or just watch Dev Patel tear through some bad guys. I cannot recommend it enough.



Photo Courtesy of UNIVERSAL

Cheer team set for next school year

Gaby Antunez
contributing writer

The Central High School cheer team tryouts were in the last week of March, and it was a highly anticipated one. A lot of people tried very hard to practice and the official list of who made the teams is out, and now there are a lot of things the CHS cheer team is preparing for this season.

The Register interviewed the JV and assistant coach Elizabeth Steinauer and cheerleader Emma Kirby, who's going into her third season in cheer.

The last cheer season was a season of many new experiences, so this upcoming season of cheer has high expectations filled with fun and new experiences. It was the first time in years that the cheer team competed in competitions and stunting at summer camp, with some performances at the football games as well.

"I along with the team, have learned this season how important every single member of the squad is when stunting and competing. Our success does not rely on a few star cheerleaders, but rather the commitment and dedication of all team members," Steinauer said.

Steinauer has realized how important teamwork is and how important it is to work as a team and not solo. Both think that the tryouts were very stressful and nerve racking because a lot of people showed up. Kirby said there was around 50 people who showed up and a lot of them were upperclassman, so she was very nervous even though this is her third season in cheer.

"This year's tryouts were a little nerve racking... After the first day I was more at ease, but overall, it was a good tryout," Kirby said.

Steinauer also found the tryout tiring but also very important, and she was glad the hardest part of choosing who's on the team is over. Both were very much shocked about how many people showed up for tryouts and Steinauer in particular by how many incoming freshmen -- current eighth graders -- came to the tryouts even though they aren't even students at Central.

"Anyone can be a cheerleader if they are coachable, love to be seen/heard, strive for perfection and love to cheer on the home team while having fun with friends!" Steinauer said.

She was excited to see how many people tried out and was very glad everyone was just as excited to cheer as she was. Kirby had never done cheer before coming to Central but had done some gymnastics before. The same goes for Steinauer. Kirby doesn't regret her decision to join cheer.

"I am doing cheer for my third season because I appreciate everything cheer has brought me. I'm with a group of girls who lift each other up and support each other and have amazing coaches to help me out when needed," Kirby said.

The cheer season just began, and they already have things planned for the summer. They will head to cheer camp again this summer in Lincoln and also hope to have another successful competition season.

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1	M	2	K	3	A	4	Y	5	P	6	H	7	O	8	B	9	E	10	A	11	C	12	D	13	C
14	O	N	C	E	15	A	I	D	E	D	16	T	A	R	A										
17	J	O	H	N	18	N	Y	G	O	T	H	19	I	S	G	U	N								
20	O	T	S	21	I	S	H	M	A	E	L	22	E	M	O										
				23	O	C	T					24	S	L	I	M									
26	S	27	H	28	A	K	E	29	U	P	S	30		31	M	A	C	32	R	33	A	34	E		
35	L	A	N	E	36	B	I	O	37	S	D	C	A	R	D										
38	A	B	I	E	39	S		40	E	N	A	41		42	S	A	N	S	A						
43	M	I	S	F	I	T	44		45	I	S	S	46		47	R	I	O	T						
48	S	T	E	F	F	I	49		49	C	H	E	50		50	Y	E	N	N	E					
				51	E	T	C	H	52			53			53	N	E	Y							
54	U	55	N	56		57	E	T	58	I	C	K	E	T	59			60		61		62			
63	C	E	N	T	64	R	A	L	R	E	G	I	65	S	T	E	R								
66	L	A	K	E	67				67	C	L	A	R	A	68			68		E	N	N	A		
69	A	R	Y	A	70				70	S	Y	B	I	L	71			71		W	A	T	T		