

THE CORRESPONDENT BY DISPATCH

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School Shooting Threat Lacks Credibility, Evokes Rumors, Fear

BY AMELIA ZOLLNER

The week of Sept. 27, rumors of a school shooting threat broke out among students. The idea of a shooting threat, which many students felt would pose a threat to their safety during the Big Game assembly on Sept. 27, caused nearly half of the student body to miss school. However, the evidence was largely blown out of proportion, as there was no concrete threat against the building, only an anonymous tip that lacked credibility and a date written on a bathroom wall that made no reference to a school shooting.

Early that week, administrators were made aware of a date written on the wall of a boys bathroom. The date solely read “Sep 27” and made no specific mention of a school shooting. However, largely due to the current frequency of school shootings in America, many students concluded that the date was a hint of someone’s intent to carry out a school shooting that day.

“From what I gathered, the date of the Big Game assembly was carved into a boys bathroom stall,” junior Grace Niemec said. “Even if it wasn’t much, it scared me how my mind immediately went to ‘school shooting’ when I heard.”

Concerns regarding the date on the bathroom wall quickly translated into various rumors, many of which were exaggerated.

“[I heard that] there was writing on a table or something along the lines of ‘watch out’ and the date,” junior Gracie Brown said.

And as rumors continued to proliferate, news of the rumored shooting threat reached a few concerned parents, causing a number of phone calls to be made to the school, the first of which was an anonymous tip made by a third party via the Sandy Hook Promise’s Say Something Anonymous Reporting System.

“... It was a tip that alarmed us because it was it was alluding that there was a note written on a desk or some sort of property within John Hersey [saying] that this was going to occur on that Friday,” School Resource Officer Taryn Gombar stated.

However, this tip lacked credibility as the person who made the tip didn’t appear to know what the purpose of the assembly was. “The complainant said that it [the shooting] was specifically going to happen at the ‘football assembly’, which was not a football assembly, it was actually the Big Game assembly, so right off the bat we were like, ‘Okay, so somebody doesn’t know exactly what’s happening, they’re not credible,’” Gombar said.

Additionally, the tip cited the presence of a note on a desk stating that there would be a school shooting. This was quickly ruled out after 5th period on Thursday, when administrators made an announcement instructing teachers to check their emails. The anticipated email was sent to all teachers and asked them to check their desks.

“As part of our investigation, we gave them [teachers] an email saying, ‘Please check all the tops of desks and the backs of desks’ to see if we had any threat. We were looking everywhere, we looked in all the bathrooms not just the boys bathroom, we looked at all the desks, all the tables, and we couldn’t find anything [besides the date],” Principal Gordon Sisson said.

After conducting a thorough investigation that also included interviews with various students, administrators were confident that the only piece of evidence that existed was the date written on the bathroom wall, which posed no threat to students.

“I’m having all my students here, all my special needs students, that’s a lot of responsibility,” Sisson said. “If I say it’s safe, to the best of my ability, I believe it’s safe.”

Despite the school’s confidence that there was no threat against the security of the building, the school continued to receive calls from people concerned about the possibility of a school shooting. That day, administration received two other calls, one from someone who self-identified as a student and one from someone who self-identified as a parent.

“I mean, this was nothing but a date on a toilet wall and people just went crazy with

rumors to the point where we had to say something,” Sisson said.

In an effort to curb the concerns that parents and students were expressing via phone calls, Sisson, along with a consultant at Forest View, the district’s superintendent, and the police department, sent out an email to parents and staff stating that “the police and school administration [had] conducted an investigation and [had] found no credibility to the threat”. This email sparked some criticism both due to its vague nature as well as the fact that it was solely sent to parents and staff, leaving some students without knowledge of the situation at that time.

“I’m not sure if the school handled the situation appropriately because I never heard any details from the school,” junior Evy Cerny said.

However, Sisson stands behind the vague nature of the email due to the fact that details could not be included as the situation was still under investigation at the time it was sent out.

“What people don’t understand is that we will never be precise in an email,” Sisson stated. “We are not telling the public, the students, the teachers all the details of an investigation that we’re running.”

Additionally, Sisson explained that the email could have included students. “I had no real reason not to [include students in the email], I just assumed that they would see it when their parents saw it,” Sisson noted.

Due to the wide range of rumors, administrators anticipated that large numbers of students would be absent that Friday, potentially putting a cap on the success of the Big Game, which caused them to consider rescheduling. However, as administrators working alongside the Arlington Heights Police Department were confident that there was no threat to the safety of the students, they decided to keep the school’s doors open through the assembly.

“Our police department said, ‘Okay, you guys are going to host school, we’re not going

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Blended Classes Stir Up Mixed Opinions

BY JENNY AN

Blended classes have been a part of Hersey since 2015 when English teacher James Schiferl tried it out with his creative writing class. But with the start of this school year, the term has been thrown around more frequently. Although blended classes are gradually becoming part of students’ schedules, many students and staff members have mixed opinions regarding blended classes.

Students generally define blended classes as classes that provide them with the opportunity to utilize their time or take a break from standard classroom environments on select days of the week as assigned by the teacher.

When students have a blended class, they are assigned additional material and are given the entire period to work; whether or not they use the class period to work efficiently is the responsibility students hold.

Associate Principal Ron Kiolbassa defined

blended classes as “a model by which teachers decide the number of days which they teach to the whole class and days which they blend, meaning students can prioritize their learning.”

The implementation of these blended classes, however, has raised the question of why classes are being taught in this matter. Some students

think it is due to a lack of space while others think it is because of budget cuts.

Kiolbassa debunked these rumors by explicitly stating the goal. “It’s truly about a college-ready piece, not a financial piece. There [are] no benefits to anybody other than teachers and students,” Kiolbassa said.

Since blended learning is such a different learning and teaching environment compared to standard classroom settings, there have been mixed reactions from both faculty and students.

“You get more time to work on areas you need to improve on, not necessarily what everyone else has to improve on. But a negative is we don’t go over everything in class, so you have to rely on your own studying to cover some things,” sophomore Hyeonseo Kim, who is enrolled in Mandarin 2, a blended class, said.

Another student in the same class as Kim, sophomore Koumae Adams, has somewhat of a

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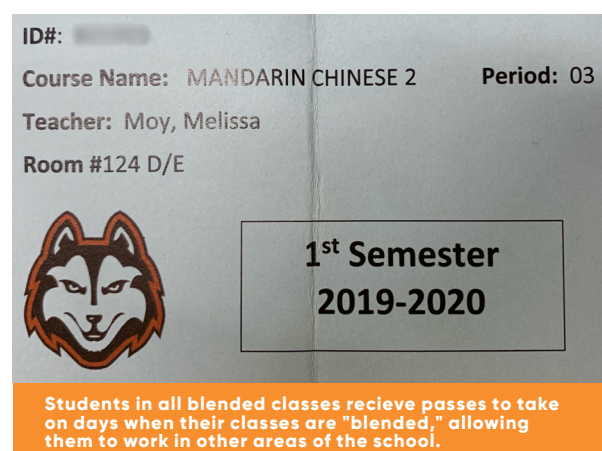


PHOTO BY JENNY AN

"Shooting Threat" Rekindles Fears of School Shootings

STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to cancel school, and we're not going to cancel the assembly at the end of the day," Gombar remarked. "We want to make it known that we are here as police officers and we're not going to stand for any type of violence whatsoever here in our building."

Despite the email's promise of students' safety, many students still felt uneasy at the idea of going to school with the concept of a shooting threat looming over their heads.

"In addition to the stress I already get from a regular school day, the anxiety that came with the idea of a chaotic and horrible scene in the Carter Gym of all places was too much," Niemeck noted. "It just seemed the easier option to just avoid that stress altogether. Even if the threat wasn't huge, it seemed better to stay home just in case as well."

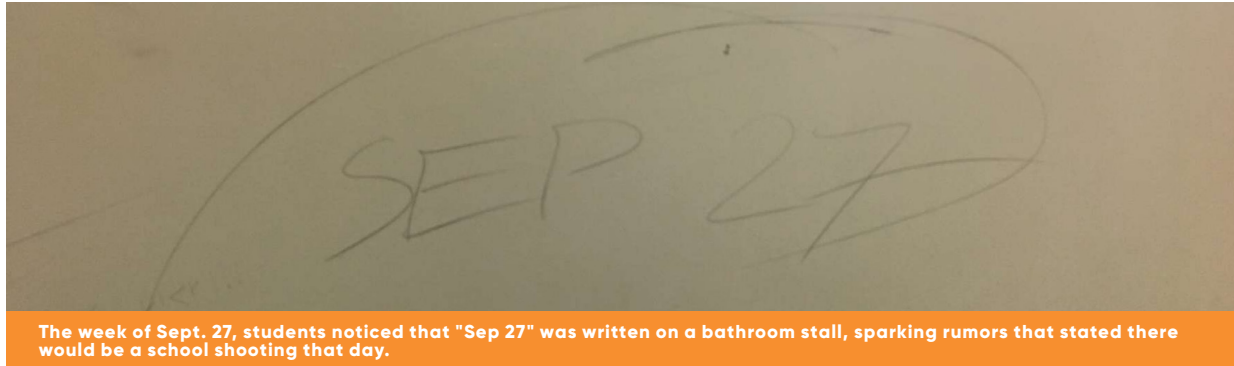
Niemeck, along with many other students stayed home that day. In total, around 800 students were absent. "People were legitimately scared because of the day and age we live in," Dean Matt Norris said.

For the students that did attend school on Sept. 27, the school employed multiple extra police officers to insure the safety of students and staff.

"We had eight other police officers there at the Big Game and they were throughout the crowd and in the corners of the main gym," Gombar said. "Some were seen, some were not, and that's what we do for safety measures." Likewise, throughout that day, an additional detective worked alongside Gombar in case any new evidence was found.

In the end, students made it through the day without any detriment to their safety. Sisson noted that, despite the large absences that ensued due to the rumors being spread, the Big Game assembly was still mostly successful.

"I [was] worried about ruining the event



The week of Sept. 27, students noticed that "Sep 27" was written on a bathroom stall, sparking rumors that stated there would be a school shooting that day.

for our [CLS] kids, it was not a fun time," Sisson said. "The event was incredibly successful and positive, I'm just sad that 800 couldn't see it. It's a disservice to everybody, a disservice to those that feel compelled to stay home, a disservice to those that are hoping to have everybody there to see them, but they [CLS kids] still rocked it!"

Although the general idea of a threat lacked credibility and students were safe throughout the day, the rumors still rekindled fears of school shootings, a common theme throughout many American high schools, that was evoked by the Parkland shooting nearly two years ago.

Many of these fears are present at Hersey as school shooting threats aren't a new concept to District 214. "We had this happen last spring at Rolling Meadows on subsequent days. We had it happen at Prospect a few weeks before we had it happen here. This was something that was starting to spread from school to school and it was something we talked about as an administrative team," Sisson said.

Sisson reflected the idea that the date written on the bathroom stall wouldn't have held any significance before modern concerns of school shootings emerged. "[If a date showed up on a bathroom stall twenty years ago,] nobody would have blinked. [A date] has become something for this group of people that

live in this current era of school violence. It's not very healthy," Sisson said.

Due to the concerns further reflected by Sept. 27's incident, the school has in place a variety of exhaustive security options. Many administrators and students have expressed that they find it disturbing how many safety procedures are necessary today to protect students from violence.

"If you knew how much time we spend on school safety versus what we teach now, you'd be shocked," Sisson said. "15 security people. Bulletproof glass, the finest that you can buy. 3M film on every window. Panic buttons throughout this building that put a message out and strobe lights up, that call 911 immediately as well as lock the building down. Procedures and protocol, I mean, on and on and on."

Amidst these concerns, numerous questions have arisen regarding the future of schools and the prevalence of school shootings. Although the topic of gun control, which was put in perspective for many students after the Sept. 27 incident occurred, tends to be politically polarizing, most, if not all, students and administrators can agree on one thing: that students shouldn't have to worry about school shootings. "We should be able to walk into our highschool and be 100% safe without thinking about this kind of nonsense," Norris said.

Are Blended Classes Fulfilling District's Wishes?

STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

differing opinion, "I really like it [blending]. I think it gives us a new perspective of responsibility, but I sometimes get distracted and end up talking the whole period," Adams said.

Although Adams does find blended classes to be beneficial to her learning, she admits that with the lack of a teacher overlook, she has trouble focusing on assignments. But Adams was not the only one who noticed a lack of focus.

"Students like blended classes because they are able to be a little more flexible with their time, however, I will have to say that a lot of times I find students coming back less prepared because they didn't properly use their time," Mandarin teacher Melissa Moy said.

Though she noticed a lack of student performance, she still values blended classes.

"It's good for teachers. We can teach

two classes separately without trying to teach multiple levels within the same time frame," Moy said.

Despite some negatives of the new teaching method, students do find it helpful. "It gives me a lot more time to work on more urgent work," sophomore Melina Blank, a student in creative writing, said.

"It's a great way for students to understand how to do more self-learning. It's especially good for preparing students for college life of less classroom time and time management," junior Caroline Stanczak, a creative writing student, agreed.

Although this is still one of the first years of experimentation with this new teaching/learning style, both students and faculty find the class permits an opportunity for responsibility to help prepare for college, fulfilling the district's goal.



Students work in the ARC during a lunch hour that coincides with blended classes.

PHOTO BY BLAKE VON DER LIPPE

Matilda Squared: Double-Casting Provides Opportunites To Showcase More Talent

BY NATALIE WOZNY

This fall, not one, but two students are getting the chance to play the leading role in the school's musical, *Matilda*. Junior Joanna Malec and senior Megan Derbick are each going to be starring as Matilda in the show for two performances. Several other roles in the show have been double cast, including Ms. Honey, Matilda's teacher. Double casting gives more students the opportunity to perform in larger roles, providing new experiences to a greater amount of young actors. On the nights when they are not playing Matilda, Malec and Derbick will still be in the ensemble as one of the children in Matilda's class named Nigel. Each of the girls is very involved in the school's fine arts program and is bound to make her own take on Matilda special.

Megan Derbick

Ever since second grade, senior Megan Derbick has been in love with performing. She was really introduced to music in second grade when she started piano, and eventually in 6th grade began participating in musicals. Derbick has continued to be involved with performing arts ever since. "There is something about being on a stage that's so thrilling. It's doing what you love with the people that you love. It's a performers job to take the audience to another world and it's so cool to go outside of your comfort zone in doing so," Derbick said.

She is now a part of Chamber Singers, Dickens Carolers, and Acapella, along with being one of the Onstage presidents. She has done the musicals every year and occasionally participates in the plays. In the spring, Derbick will be one of the student directors for One Acts.

Derbick names *Matilda* as her favorite production at Hersey to date. Throughout her time here, however, she has been a part of many productions that have impacted her in multiple ways. "I have learned so much about myself as not only a performer, but a person as well. I've been exposed to an environment that promotes nothing but greatness, love, and connection. I have come out of my shell immensely and have gained so much more confidence!" Derbick said.

Derbick's directors have noticed her immense growth as well. Her progress as a performer is recognized and something she should be proud of. "I think that what I've enjoyed with Megan the most is the progress she has made and the steps she's been taking. I think that the process she has gone through to be able to gain confidence in herself and beat her timidity is rewarding," director Kyle Marquette said.

More of a planner, Derbick likes to know what she is doing beforehand so she can constantly improve herself. Although she is constantly working on her craft, Derbick has a really silly side that choral director, Sara Michael, thinks not everybody gets to see. She also brings positivity to whatever environment she is working in. Derbick not only focuses on bettering herself, but is also always willing to help those around her. On top of it all, she stays very humble. "I think she's so talented and pushes herself in this show like I've never seen her push herself before," Michael said.

Both Marquette and Michael agree that Derbick is perfect for portraying Matilda's innocence. "Megan has an innocence about her, and she is trusting in people. I think she's a person who although she trusts people, believes in people, and is supportive, she's going to fight for the little man, and she is going to stand up for what is right and what is good," Michael said. Matilda and Derbick both possess these traits.

Derbick can't wait to step onto stage as Matilda. "Matilda is a role like no other I've ever played before, and I'm so excited to explore the character! Matilda is not only a demanding character to play vocally and choreographically, but she has to be an incredible story teller," Derbick says. To Derbick, Matilda is a young girl who just wants her voice to be heard. She believes she will go above and beyond for justice, fairness, and honesty - something that inspires Derbick. She can't wait to make the audience love the character as much as she has grown to love her.

Theater Department Adopts *Matilda*

BY ALEXIS SANTIAGO

This year's fall musical takes on the musical version of a popular classic children's book by Roald Dahl called *Matilda*. *Matilda* tells the story of a young girl living with her crude family, going to school, and having to deal with her evil principal. However, Matilda discovers she has telekinesis powers that can help her defend herself and her friends against the principal and her family. This year's fall musical stars senior Megan Derbick and junior Joanna Malec, who are both taking on the leading role of Matilda. Students can buy their tickets for \$10 and watch the show on November 14-16.

Learn more about *Matilda!*

[CLICK HERE](#)

Video by Alexis Santiago

Joanna Malec

Junior Joanna Malec is the kind of student who gives her all, no matter what she is doing. She is constantly pushing herself to be the best she can be, but never takes things too seriously.

"She is hilarious, she's got a sense of humor, she's fun to be around and is very talented. She is not afraid to go into things a little bit deeper, dive into them again from an activist perspective, and to go for that deeper level of understanding of things," Sara Michael, Malec's choir director, said.

Malec began singing in her Polish school's choir. From there, she did all sorts of plays and musicals. She started auditioning for the musicals offered at her school every year in since fourth grade. She also got involved with show choir by joining Centerstage, a middle school group, in eighth grade. She then continued her show choir career in high school by participating in Ladies First freshman and sophomore year and Onstage junior year. Malec was also a part of Women's Choral her sophomore year and is now a part of Chamber Singers.

Matilda will be Malec's fourth official show at Hersey. Malec's favorite memory from the productions she has been a part of comes from the play *Kindertransport*.

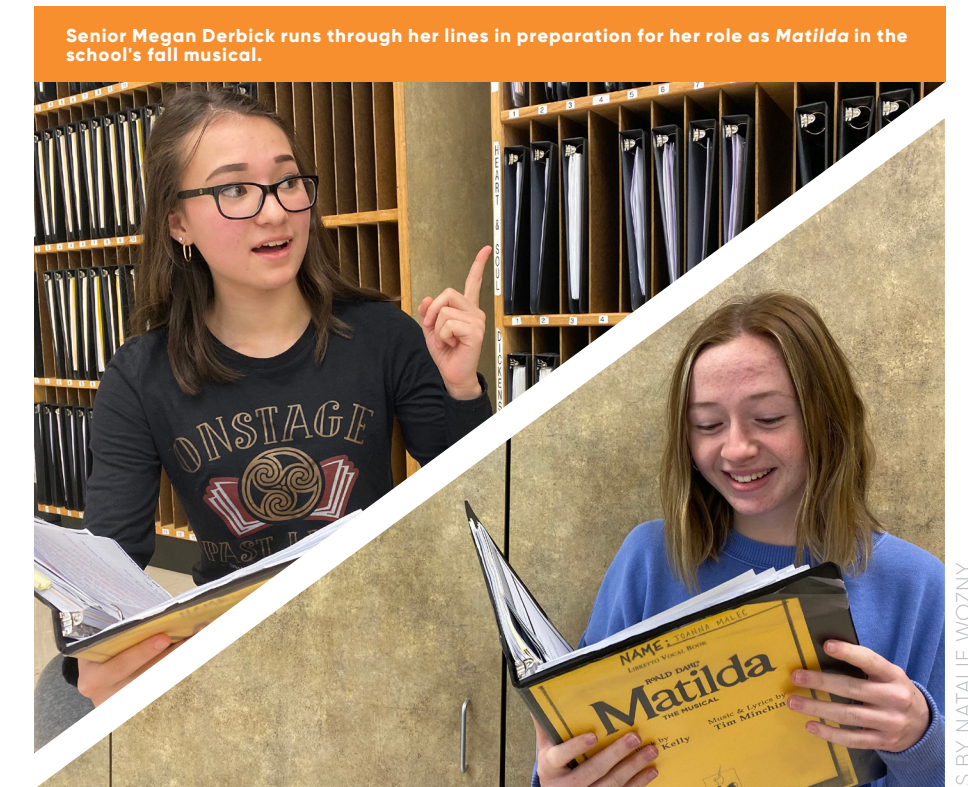
"In this show, I had to cry several times. When I got to see the audience's reaction during those scenes, it was the most incredible feeling. It was amazing to see the amount of people that were moved throughout that story," Malec said.

Malec has grown into the performer she is today throughout the time she has spent in high school. "Joanna, I think, always started kind of as a little bit timid, a little shy, and a little unsure of herself. I think one of the things that is happening for her is she's becoming much more confident in herself and is willing to take risks, and that's what helps her," director Kyle Marquette said.

Malec cannot wait to portray the role of Matilda on stage, who she describes as an incredibly clever and brilliant young girl. To Malec, Matilda has an immense strength behind her words that isn't commonly found. Matilda's qualities also can be seen in bits of Malec's personality. Matilda may be a fictional character, but she is brought to life with Malec's interpretation.

"I think that Joanna has Matilda's determination and Matilda's sense of right and wrong and her desire to make sure that things are done in the right way. I think that sense of there is a black and a white and doing what is right is there and I think that is what is great about Joanna in terms of Matilda," Marquette said.

"She has a spunkiness about her, and she's got that fighting attitude," Michael said.



Senior Megan Derbick runs through her lines in preparation for her role as Matilda in the school's fall musical.

Junior Joanna Malec, who will star as Matilda in the school's production of the musical, reads over her lines in the choir room.

PHOTOS BY NATALIE WOZNY

How To Stay Spooky This Halloween: Last Minute DIY Costumes

BY GRACE MEISTER & NATALIE WOZNY

It's easy to know that fall is in full swing when everything suddenly comes in pumpkin flavors, everyone's Instagram captions are autumn puns, and the leaves on the trees are a gorgeous tangerine ombré. Fall means so much from football games to spooky movie nights with friends. There are so many ways to get into the fall spirit and there are many ways to do this without spending much. One of the best parts of fall is Halloween, but finding a creative costume can sometimes be difficult and pricey. Looking inside one's closet can spark some inspiration and lead to finding the perfect costume. We asked various Hersey students for their takes on DIY costumes and their favorite fall festivities.



Senior Hope Fenwick grabbed all of her VSCO girl essentials – a Hydro Flask, a scrunchie, a shell necklace, and an oversized tee. In the fall, she loves going to pumpkin patches and drinking apple cider.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HOPE FENWICK



Senior Hannah Van Meveren pulled together a flannel and some cowboy boots for a Western-inspired rancher/farm girl look. Hannah loves going to pumpkin patches with her friends and family during this season.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HANNAH VAN MEVEREN



Senior Dana Palmer took out a camera and some shades to become a tourist in her own home. She loves picking apples to get into the fall spirit.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANA PALMER



Sophomore Avery Meir turned herself into a personal trainer with her mom's weights, an athletic tank top, and a baseball cap. She loves going to local pumpkin patches during autumn.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AVERY MEIR



Senior Nicola Vargas grabbed her fuzzy winter wear and dressed up as a polar bear. Nicole's favorite thing about fall is wearing comfy clothes.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NICOLE VARGAS



Kate Lubbe repurposed her old show choir costume to give off a goddess vibe. During the fall, she loves the extra hour she gets during daylight savings.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATE LUBBE



Senior Emily Prosser brought out all her tie dye to pull off a hippie look. During fall, Emily loves shopping for cozy sweaters and outfits.

PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY PROSSER



Senior Emily Butryn transformed herself into a choreographer by pulling out her choir binder, donning some dance wear, and throwing her hair into a bun. During fall, she loves the color of the leaves changing.

PHOTO BY GRACE MEISTER



The Howl is John Hersey High School's cutting-edge news platform for students, parents, alumni, fans, and faculty to discover what's happening inside and outside the walls of the "Home of the Huskies!"

PODCAST

1. Preparing for the Championship with Coach Pardun

In this episode, sophomore Connor Durkin sits down with coach Joe Pardun once again and they discuss all the preparation that takes place before a big game like the one against Rolling Meadows.

[Listen Here](#)

Podcast by Connor Durkin

2. All About Effective Time Management

Junior Natalie Wozny and senior Grace Meister sit down with psychology teacher and dance choreographer Ariana Cappuccitti to talk about how to manage time wisely and efficiently.

[Listen Here](#)

Podcast by Grace Meister & Natalie Wozny

3. The Superhero Special

Senior Josh Ho and sophomore Max Garcia follow up to their first podcast with an update on negotiations between Spider-Man, Sony, and Disney. They discuss what this deal means for the future and also touch on the cultural conversation regarding superhero films as a whole.

[Listen Here](#)

Podcast by Josh Ho & Max Garcia

4. Film Review: Joker

Senior Josh Ho and sophomore Max Garcia review Todd Phillips' polarizing new film *Joker*, discussing what worked and also where the film was lacking. They touch on where this new film fits into the current state of the industry and whether the film is set up for an awards run.

[Listen Here](#)

Podcast by Josh Ho & Max Garcia

"Mario Kart Tour" Takes First Place

BY MAX GARCIA

The *Mario Kart* franchise has been around for 27 years and has entertained many kids, teens, and adults all over the world since then. Starting all the way back in 1992, the first game in the series was "Super Mario Kart" on the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES). *Mario Kart* is a spin-off of the Mario franchise. It takes the characters and world and puts them in the racing genre of video games.

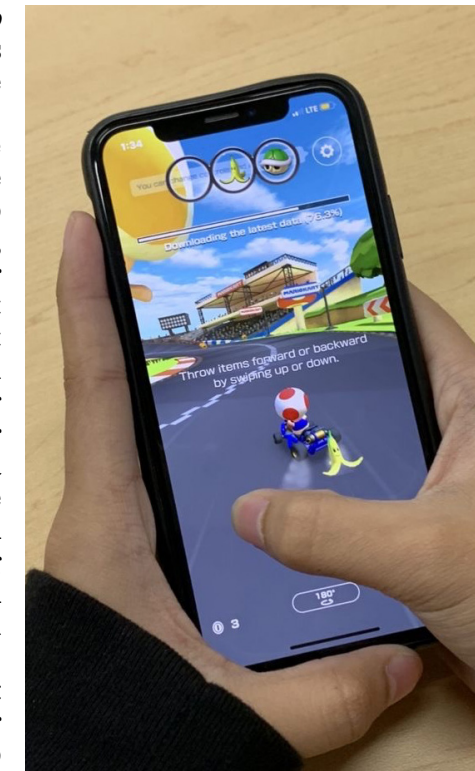
"Mario Kart Tour" is the newest game in the franchise, but it's not like any other game in the series. This time, the game is not on a Nintendo system like all the other games in the franchise, it's on mobile devices. *Mario Kart* is no stranger to portable devices; games like "Mario Kart Super Circuit," "Mario Kart DS," "Mario Kart 7," and "Mario Kart 8 Deluxe" have all been on portable systems, but "Mario Kart Tour" being on mobile, anyone with an iPhone, Android, or another phone can play *Mario Kart*, and with a character as popular as Mario, a lot of people are going to be interested. "Mario Kart Tour" had over 90 million downloads in its first week, being the second fastest-growing mobile game behind "Call Of Duty Mobile," which had over 100 million downloads in about a week.

At its core, "Mario Kart Tour" is still *Mario Kart* and plays like a *Mario Kart* game, but in order to work on a mobile device, its designers had to change things up with the controls. There are two types of ways to control, manual and drift. Manual lets players glide their finger across the screen while with drift, when players swipe left or right,

they perform a drift which gives them a speed boost. Items from past *Mario Kart* games are returning, however, "Mario Kart Tour" also welcomes a new feature. The new ability in "Mario Kart Tour" is called Frenzy. Players can get a Frenzy when they get three of the same item. This lets them become invincible and have an unlimited amount of the item they got for a short period of time.

Probably the biggest difference from past games is how players unlock characters and car parts. They don't start out with a certain amount of characters and car parts but use in-game currency to fire a pipe, which is how they get characters and parts for their car. There are three ranks for characters and car parts: normal, super, and high-end. These ranks determine how common or how rare it is to get a character or kart part. This has caused an issue with some players since some popular characters are harder to get than some unpopular characters and the in-game currency can be hard to obtain without spending money.

This, however, hasn't stopped the game from making money. While the game is free, "Mario Kart Tour" has made \$12 million since it was released. "Mario Kart Tour" is a huge success and is not going anywhere for awhile. With its huge player base and with how much money it's making, Nintendo is going to be pushing this game a lot. The game handles well for a mobile game and it can be played by almost anyone, bringing in new and old fans alike.



A student plays "Mario Kart Tour," the newest game in the Mario Kart franchise, on their phone.

PHOTO BY MAX GARCIA

Oscar Season Preview and the Chicago International Film Festival

BY JOSH HO

With the changing weather comes my favorite time of year: Oscar season. Gone are the dull and meaningless summer blockbusters, replaced by award-friendly fare that studios try to push for awards. These next three months historically feature the best films of the year, so it is an exciting time for movie lovers. This month, we decided to head to the Chicago International Film Festival, an annual festival that gives a first look into the year's award contenders. This year's lineup features stirring dramas, satires and everything in between. Click the link for a video highlighting the festival and the can't-miss films coming to theaters near you.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FESTIVAL](#)

Video by Josh Ho



The red carpet at the Chicago International Film Festival.

PHOTO BY JOSH HO

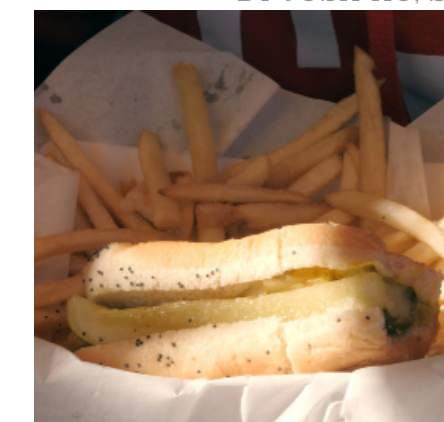
October's Budget Bites

BY JOSH HO, SAM SOBCZAK, & CONNOR DURKIN

This year the foods crew will be taking on a new challenge. They will be traveling from location to location each month, trying to find breakfast, lunch, and dinner in that location for under \$30. This special segment will be called Budget Bites. We headed down to the historic town of Evanston, home to Northwestern University and located right on the lake. In addition to finding three great restaurants we stopped by the campus to take a closer look at a Northwestern tradition that students began back in the 1970's. We ate at three local favorites Great Harvest Bread Company, Mustards Last Stand, and Flat Top Grill.



A Homemade wildcat scone from Great Harvest Bread Company.



Chicago style dog with fries at Mustard's Last Stand.



Build your own stir fry with buttery roti bread at Flat Top Grill.

PHOTOS BY JOSH HO

For September's Budget Bites [CLICK HERE](#)
Video by Connor Durkin

IN DEPTH

Extracurriculars Guide Students to Find Their Niches

BY JESSIE CARLQUIST & TEDDY ZHAKLINOVA



PHOTO COURTESY OF MR. AYALA

LASO -

MEETS WEDNESDAYS
AFTER SCHOOL IN ROOM 201

Many students practice in another culture and language at home, which allows them to communicate in more than one language and compare cultures. Latin American Student Organization (LASO) focuses on keeping Latin culture and history alive and helps the Latin community in different ways. "Our mission is to change stereotypes about ourselves as young Latino students, provide support for Hersey students, learn about our culture, keep it alive, and provide service to our community," Spanish teacher Michael Ayala said.

LASO is one of the longest-running student led clubs at Hersey established in November of 1994 by Dr. Michael Ayala. "Our values as an organization are responsibility, honesty, diversity, and above all respect," Ayala said.

LASO students unite to help organizations like Feed My Starving Children, tutor at local elementary schools, provide gifts and entertainment to celebrate Christmas with the Hermosa community, and participate in other service-related activities. LASO Club includes students from all ethnicities that are interested in learning about the Latin culture. "My favorite part of the club is that we are all united. We're not united by our ethnicities or what we like, or what we do, or what we used to do, instead we're united by new things," senior Jovanna Casillas Leos said.



SOS students organizing their next event.

PHOTO BY LOUIS QUILTER

SOS -

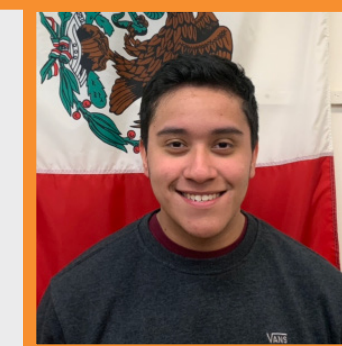
2ND PERIOD IN ROOM 115
MEETINGS TBD
AFTER SCHOOL IN ROOM 115

Service Over Self (SOS) is well known for organizing the Food Drive every year, but they actually do a lot more.

"SOS performs 40 projects that service our community on various levels. We do both inside our school and outside with various community groups," SOS teacher Mark Gunther said. Throughout the year they host the Food Drive, Veteran's Day Card Making, Dance Marathon, Love Bus, Senior Citizen Day, Funner Olympics and many more outside of school activities.

Students split the work between groups to be able to perfect everything to the tiniest detail and help the community, often learning new values along the way. "Students will not only learn skills of leadership, compassion, inclusion, and gratitude but also develop a healthier sense of self," Gunther said.

The students not only get to participate in the whole process but also get to see the smiles they bring to people's faces, bringing both sides joy. "My favorite part of SOS is seeing the community come together and physically seeing the impact of our hard work pay off," senior Ashlyn Park said. SOS is both a class and a club, making it very easy for students to get involved.



"I really enjoy having a collaborative group of students who can really enjoy the culture and even work together for a common goal and work together to make events."

- Jovany Melchior (LASO)

PHOTO BY TEDDY ZHAKLINOVA



"My favorite part is just seeing how the service projects bring different types of people who normally wouldn't interact, come together to help on a project."

- Luke Martin (SOS)

PHOTO BY LOUIS QUILTER

SCRUBS -

MEETINGS TBD
IN ROOM 137

Scrubs Club members on the executive board help in organizing speakers, activities, blood drives and all things that create opportunities for these students.

"The goal of Scrubs Club is to benefit students who are possibly interested in pursuing a health-related career," biology and healthcare teacher Kelley Pataky said.

Students participate in many different activities and events. Kelley Pataky explained that they participate in not only speaker events, but also attend field trips, help coordinate the Annual Dance Marathon, and organize the biannual Blood Drive. "[Scrubs Club] offers the Dr. B. Vital Series in which Dr. Brotzman, a retired pediatrician, teaches our students how to use a stethoscope, take a manual blood pressure, test reflexes, and perform a cursory eye and ear exam," Pataky said.

Scrubs Club helps many students find what they want to do as they are allowed to choose which speakers and activities they attend based on their desired career. "The speakers that come in are great and they do activities to push people towards a medical career. [Scrubs Club] gives us stepping stones to build on and gives us connections to many careers in the health area," senior Molly McKavanagh said. Students that have not chosen a specific path within the health field can visit different events to help them make their decision.



PHOTO BY JESSIE CARLQUIST

MATH TEAM -

MEETS TUESDAYS
AFTER SCHOOL
IN ROOM 152

Math Team is a favorite among students. Everyone involved prepares for a year-long season as they compete from August till the state meet in May. These students go beyond the walls of the classroom and learn math most students do not. "Our team (we are not a club) offers a chance to improve mathematical and problem solving skills beyond those seen in a typical high school curriculum," teacher and coach Jackie Ballarini said.

The students create a strong bond between each other while working through challenging math problems. "There are also many opportunities for fun and team bonding," Jackie Ballarini said. With the chance to improve mathematical and problem-solving skills beyond a typical high school curriculum while working together with other students, Math Team is ultimately a good experience.

Math team is a great option for anybody with a passion for challenges and problem-solving. "I enjoy math because it provides an extra challenge that is fun to try and figure out, but also it was a great way for me to make friends when I joined freshman year," junior Clara Menninga said. Students involved can compete in something they're truly passionate about and make friends along the way.



Math Club students working through problems together to prepare for their next competition.

PHOTO BY JESSIE CARLQUIST



"My favorite part of math team is when we meet up in Mr. Johnson's room before meets and eat pizza and go over any last minute topics before heading off."

- Amélie Smithson (Math Team)

PHOTO BY TEDDY ZHAKLINOVA

SPORTS

Michael's Take: NBA Season Sampler

BY MICHAEL SOMARY

The highly anticipated 2019-2020 NBA regular season is underway and basketball fans everywhere should be excited because this season will have the most parity of any season in recent history.

The Golden State Warriors and LeBron James have accounted for at least one of the teams in the NBA Finals since the 2011 season, while facing each other four times in the Finals during this period. The Warriors have reached the finals each of the last five NBA Finals.

However, last year's upset of the Golden State Warriors in the NBA Finals by Kawhi Leonard's Toronto Raptors marked a turning point in the standing of the NBA.

With an offseason full of wild trades and astonishing free-agency signings, the Warriors reign has likely come to an end.

All-NBA Power Forward Anthony Davis signed with the Los Angeles Lakers to team up with LeBron James, which instantly made the Lakers championship contenders.

As a result of Davis's move to the Lakers, Kawhi Leonard, arguably the best basketball player in the world, left --the Raptors, convinced the L.A. Clippers to trade for All-NBA Small Forward Paul George, and proceeded to sign with the Clippers himself.

Shortly after Paul George demanded to be traded from the Oklahoma City Thunder to the Los Angeles Clippers, the Thunder looked to trade one-time league MVP Russell Westbrook. He eventually found a home on the Houston Rockets, where Westbrook will team up with also one-time league MVP James Harden.

After all the offseason drama, the two favorites to win the NBA Championship are in the same city: Los Angeles. The Lakers are the favorites, followed very closely by the Clippers.

It's always a bad idea to bet against LeBron James, arguably the best player in the history of the game. So, if I were to bet on a team to win the NBA Championship, I would not hesitate to choose LeBron James, Anthony Davis, and the Los Angeles Lakers.

HUSKIES' TAKE

"The Lakers are going to win the Championship because the LeBron, Anthony Davis duo is too good to be stopped," senior Cole Vanstaalduinen said.

"I think the Clippers are going to win because Kawhi won the championship last year and he will probably do the same thing again," junior Annie Lindgren said.

ATHLETES OF THE MONTH

BY MICHAEL SOMARY



Anna Harden

Star freshman cross-country runner Anna Harden is the Huskies' number one runner this fall.

This success did not happen out of anywhere. Harden has been running for a long time with a strong mindset. "I've been running since 4th grade and I always love the opportunity to continue to improve," Harden said.

Harden has positive influences in her life that make her a strong runner. "I look up to my sister because she's really hard-working and never makes excuses, and she's also a runner," Harden said. The Huskies' girls cross-country team has great camaraderie with each other, in which each runner supports the others. Harden was the only freshman on the varsity team but quickly felt a sense of belonging.

"The team is so fun and inviting and we're all determined to help each other get better and improve our times," Harden said. "I look forward to each season because it is an opportunity to improve and I enjoy each and every opportunity I get."

LEARN MORE ABOUT ANNA

VIDEO BY OSCAR GARCIA & JOEY BYROM



Jordan Hansen

Senior Quarterback Jordan Hansen is leading the Huskies to a prosperous 2019 season. Hansen himself is having one of the most successful seasons in Hersey's history, which resulted from a childhood of hard work.

Hansen grew up loving football. "I just played football because I loved it; I didn't think I would be in this situation right now, but I'm grateful for it," Hansen said.

He has been a leader for the Huskies football program since his freshman year. "We had a good group of guys freshman year, and we kept it going year after year," Hansen said.

Hansen enjoys playing for his teammates but recognizes the impact the Orange Crush fan section has on the team. "We always like a lit atmosphere," said Hansen. "When they're going, we're going."

He recently committed to Northern Illinois University to continue his academic and athletic career.

Hansen will miss the family aspect of Hersey Football. "The family culture is what's special about Hersey Football. Whether you're a freshman or senior, you're part of our family."

LEARN MORE ABOUT JORDAN

VIDEO BY BLAKE VON DER LIPPE

If you missed the Varsity football game against Rolling Meadows [CLICK HERE](#)

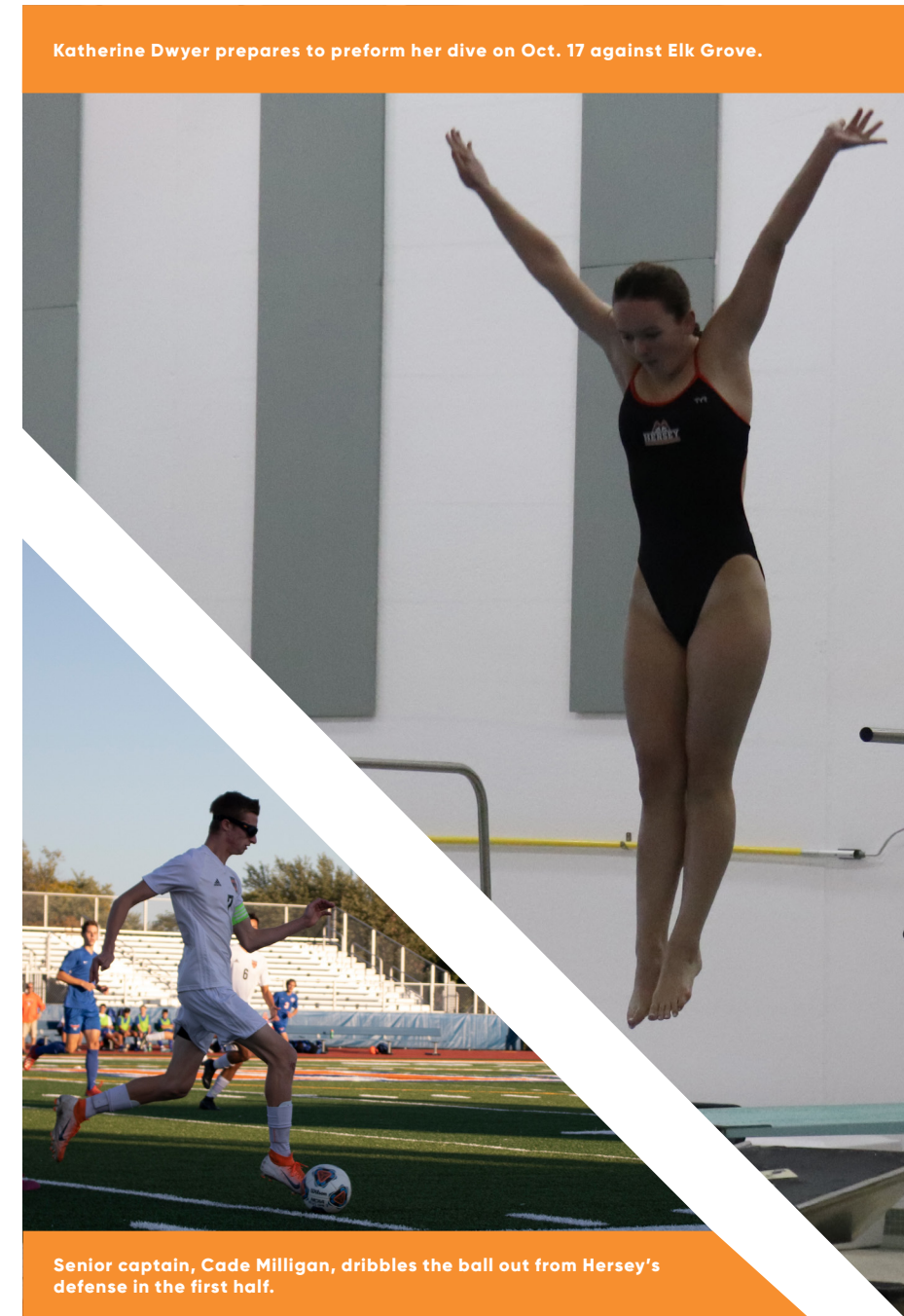


Annie Lindgren starts on her block to swim in the 50 Free in the Elk Grove swim meet.

PHOTO BY AMELIA ZOLLNER

PHOTO BY MAX HANSEN

Senior Sindi Sadiku pulls up for a 3-pointer during the Big Game. Teammate Grace Belmonte trails for a rebound while defenders Ola Mroz, Ernest Maisei and Jacob Muskal try to get back on defense.



Katherine Dwyer prepares to perform her dive on Oct. 17 against Elk Grove.

PHOTO BY AMELIA ZOLLNER

Senior captain, Cade Milligan, dribbles the ball out from Hersey's defense in the first half.

PHOTO BY TEDDY ZHAKLINOVA



Homecoming king Frank Karigan and queen Evelyn Chung sit on the stage after being crowned during the homecoming assembly.

PHOTO BY AMELIA ZOLLNER

PHOTO BY TEDDY ZHAKLINOVA



The boys soccer team huddle before they played Hoffman Estates on Oct. 8

PHOTO BY MAX HANSEN

Hersey Dispatch produces a variety of mediums for students, staff, and community members to stay up to date on Hersey news. The Dispatch is created by journalism students at John Hersey High School, 1900 East Thomas Street, Arlington Heights, Illinois, 60004. Call for advertising rates. Phone (847) 718-5182. Hersey Dispatch welcomes a free exchange of ideas. Letters to the editor may be sent to jhs.dispatch@d214.org. Because school officials do not engage in prior review, and the content of the Hersey Dispatch is determined by, and reflects only the views of the students & staff

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