



Study Hall Chess Championship

By Henry Willis, Class of 2019

Thanks to Mrs. Larkin, the school librarian, and all those who participated, the Library Media Center (LMC) was able to host the first study hall chess championship in E.O. Smith history. Over the course of November, 16 students, some of whom had started playing chess just this school year, competed in a group stage format. Study halls were coordinated and groups were formed accordingly, putting friends head-to-head in fierce chess matches.

In Group A, seniors Connor Grosse, Billy Leech, and Sebastian de Leon-Aubrey battled each other and Andrian Steward, the favorite to win the tournament. All in all, Steward came out on top of the group as expected.

In Group B, Henry Willis, Clark Bray, Erik Choi, and Jonas Goemans exchanged blows in close matches. Despite expectations of Willis, aka 'Magnus Fischer,' easily sweeping his group, Choi and Goemans advanced, showing that they were clearly strong contenders.

In Group C, the heat was brought. Arguably, the most competitive group, Group C did not disappoint and proved to be the best matches to watch with super senior Quentin Walliser and fellow seniors Michael Lin, Atticus Makuch, and Miles Mitoma competing. Makuch proved dominant in his group, and Walliser and Lin battled to the end, with Walliser ultimately prevailing.

In Group D, there was no shortage in talent. Seniors Cooper Clark, Evan Richards, Gabriel Wright, and Griffin Ryan all fought with the intent of ultimately winning the trophy. Two clear title contenders, Wright and Clark, arose from the group, and at this point we all knew this was going to be a good tournament.

In the elimination stage, matches were played best out of two, meaning that the first player to record 1.5 points (win, 1 point; draw, 0.5 points; and loss, 0 points) was the winner. The first round of eliminations concluded with Walliser falling to Clark, Wright victorious over Makuch, Steward soaring past Goemans, and Choi defeating Grosse.

The semifinals proved tough on the mental game of the players with many making fatal mistakes and poor moves. Despite losing the first game to Wright, Steward fought back to earn himself a place in the finals. Clark continued his dominance, showing no remorse and giving spectators second thoughts about who was the favorite to win.

It all came down to the final match, a match over a month in the making. All bragging rights rested on this match, and the banter about who was the best at chess in study hall would finally come to an end. In just two games, Clark ousted the favorite Steward, winning the November 2018 Study Hall Chess Championship Trophy.

In the post final interview, Clark said, "The tournament wasn't just a tough fight throughout its duration, but especially during the finals. The last battle against Steward was by far the toughest, and he deserves all due credit. An event like this allowed friendly competition in a more relaxed environment, which was something new and fun. Definitely enjoyable and worth every second." Steward responded, "it was a good effort from myself, but ultimately I congratulate Cooper on his victory."

All in all, this tournament was a great success and could not have been done without the help of Mrs. Larkin and the integrity of the players. If you have more than one study hall, have played chess before, and would be interested in competing in a future tournament, feel free to email any of the 'study hall chess' council members: Willish19@eosmith.org, Choi19@eosmith.org, Stewarda19@eosmith.org, Clarkc@eosmith.org, Linnm@eosmith.org, or Walliserq@eosmith.org



Cooper Clark, left, the chess champion of the study hall tournament, poses with runner-up Andrian Steward after the field of 16 participants staged an entertaining competition.



Junior Andy Garcia Gonzalez works on a mini decorated evergreen tree as part of another successful FFA Holiday Sale at E.O. Smith.

Grow with Ag

By Timothy Hill
Class of 2020

Over 22 million people in America are directly employed by the agriculture industry, and as the global population grows, increased numbers of young and knowledgeable agriculturists will be needed to tackle the issue of food availability. The Agricultural Education Program at E.O. Smith aims to face this problem through a unique combination of classroom teaching and hands-on learning.

Agriculture Education (AgEd) has five different majors to study available: Animal Science, Plant Science, Natural Resources, Ag Mechanics, and Turf and Landscape Management. Animal Science teaches all the logistics for the management of both large and small animal species. Natural Resources focuses on environmental studies such as forestry and ecology. Plant Science studies numerous horticultural practices, along with floral design and greenhouse management. Ag Mechanics students learn to operate, diagnose, and repair many different kinds of agricultural equipment. Turf and Landscape Management members develop skills needed to work in the landscape industry, gaining important experience maintaining school grounds and athletic fields. With such a wide array of studies, future possibilities after high school are limitless.

The schedule of an Agriculture education class is just like any other science class, but the day-to-day teaching method can differ greatly. Student Bethany Lafontaine remarks: "The curriculum is varied in such a way that one day we could be sitting in class learning from a PowerPoint, to another learning by doing hands-on stuff, to another taking a trip to the college of Ag at

UConn." The close proximity of E.O. Smith to UConn is a benefit that allows classes to interact with real-life farmers to understand how they work. Along with being extremely valuable for career preparation, Ag is truly enjoyable. The members of this sub-community within the high school share a common passion. The teachers know and care about their content and what they are instilling, fostering a memorable and enriched learning environment. Students can take a break from traditional teaching and discover something new and refreshing every day. Turf and Landscape Management teacher Matt Agnello describes the program as "different than any other class you could take -- in a good way."

This program has created something extraordinary, opening the horizons for hundreds of students who go through its halls. With a plethora of individual areas to explore, students can see everything from mini horses to bear pelts and learn skills from metal welding to floral arrangement. The numerous state and even national awards earned by students in the program is a testament to the effort extended and the results produced by all concerned.

Mr. Agnello comments, "It's something you need to come into with an open mind. It's a whole possible avenue that you could go down in your life and you might just not know it yet."

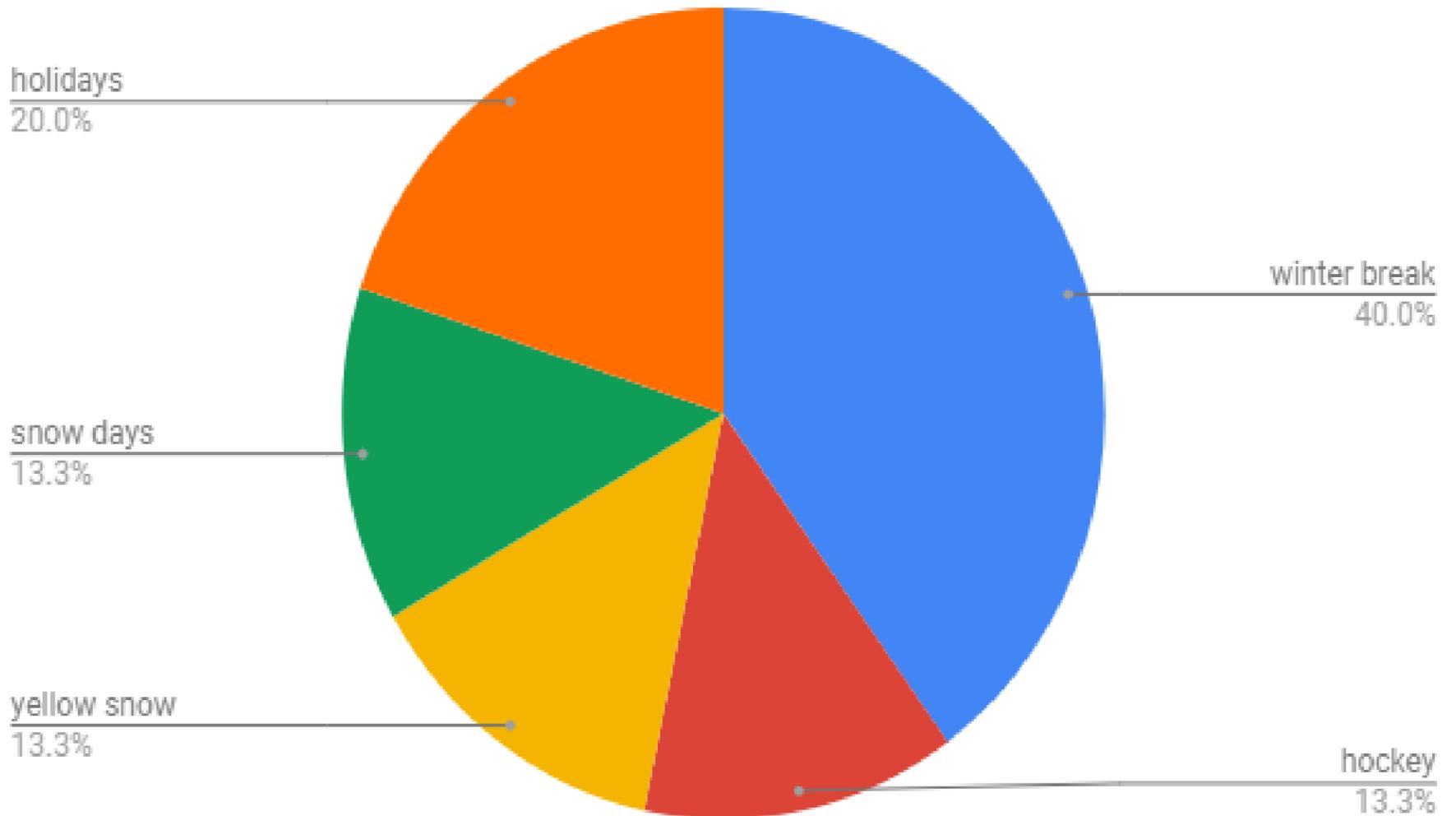


From left to right, Zya Spruell, Adrianna Bartlett, Alyen Valencia, and Courtney Doherty prepare evergreen candle centerpieces to fill orders during the annual FFA Holiday Sale.

Question of the Month: What is your Favorite thing about Winter?

Here's a chart of the top responses:

What E.O. Likes Most About Winter!



Some other interesting responses:

Maple Syrup in Snow
Hot baths
Giant Snowballs
Sledding
Winter Style
And many more!



Original Drawing by Eco Manso

Lamont Elected Governor

By Griffin Ryan, Class of 2019

Wednesday Nov. 8 was an important day in Connecticut, as Governor Elect Ned Lamont was sworn into office. Governor Lamont won a tough election in 2018 as his campaign, throughout the general election, was in the shadow of the previous Malloy administration. Governor Malloy, a democrat, had the second lowest approval rating out of any governor with only Chris Christie of New Jersey lower. With Connecticut's economy in steady decline and with many businesses and residents leaving for other states, it seemed that people believed a change was necessary as to which party held the office of Governor in Connecticut.

Lamont's triumph over his opponent, Bob Stefanowski, was by a thin margin, showing the true effects of Malloy on voters in the state. Though now that Lamont is in office, what are his plans to turn around Connecticut's economic situation?

To start, Lamont campaigned on the idea that college should be affordable to any and every citizen of Connecticut. He plans to lower in-state tuition for Connecticut state universities. But higher education was not the only educational goal on his agenda. Governor Lamont wants to promote industrial jobs, such as those for mechanics and machinists — jobs that are in high demand in Connecticut and, frankly, in most of the United States.

Second, Lamont believes in the legalization of recreational marijuana for adults in Connecticut. With positive reports showing high tax revenue in other states, such as California and Colorado, from this industry, it seemed a great way to aid our debt-riddled state.

The new governor also aims to install tolls for out-of-state trucks. The reasoning for this was to find other sources of revenue, by having trucks from other states pay for their fair share of wear and tear on Connecticut highways. Lamont also cited many times the state of Connecticut's infrastructure, mentioning crumbling roads and bridges in desperate need of repair. He claims that these tolls will also motivate companies that ship often to move to the state to avoid toll costs.

E.O. Smith Robotics Club!

By Alexis Nadeau, Alyssa Newell,
and Emmet Starkweather
Class of 2019

Innovation is a modern essential pillar to human development and growth into the future. It is this innovative thinking that the organization For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology or FIRST seeks to harness within adolescents and young adults. Focusing on the fields of STEM -- science, technology, engineering, and mathematics -- FIRST wishes to fuel the interests in the younger generations.

State of the art organizations such as the FIRST Robotics Program help to assist students in grades 9-12 with learning the difficult but necessary skills that shall be required to continue the technological growth and innovation that our era depends. Some of the careers that require these skills are mechanical design, electrical engineering, software engineering, and manufacturing.

"My experience on the FIRST Robotics Team has provided me with access to more knowledge than I was able to acquire previously, and has introduced me to better overall materials than I would have access to otherwise," club member Nick Mercado said.

Students are allotted a time known as a build season with each team given six weeks to build a robot that will be used to compete in various competitions across that state. Each branch of our team does different tasks and works together with the other parts of the team in order to build a robot in a fast and efficient way. For example, the mechanical design people work on the technical sketches of the different components of the robot, while the electrical engineering people work on the wiring and the electrical boards.

While these two branches do very different things, they have to cooperate to make sure that all of the electrical components will be able to fit and work on the mechanical parts. Likewise, people operating in the software engineering branch have to program the robot so that it moves, which requires significant communication with those in the electrical and design branches. This is because the programmers need to know the electronic components that will be used in order to program them correctly, and they need to know the design of the robot, so that it is programmed in a way that allows it to move smoothly and effectively.

After the six weeks, our robot is taken to various competitions around the state where it competes with other teams in completing certain tasks such as lifting boxes and putting them on levers, climbing up walls, or shooting balls at specific targets. The adrenaline rush that is experienced is wild as the arena is constantly filled with the passion and excitement that is elicited by the thrill that comes with having a



E.O. Smith Team 3555 celebrates after taking a first place in the Bay State Brawl Robotics competition.

Students Communicate in Clubs

By Abigail Levine, Class of 2022

E.O. Smith High School's numerous Language Arts-related clubs are now in full swing. All these clubs allow students to embrace their love of writing, reading, and art. They feature several different kinds of publications, displaying the students' talents and interests.

These clubs consist of Virtu Club, where students can show off their creative writing and art skills; the Newspaper Club, where students are able to write articles in the *Panther Press* about everyday events; the Book Club, which allows students to embrace their love of reading and discuss their newly read books with other club members; and the Poetry Club, which offers an open atmosphere for students to share their work.

The Virtu Club is close again to reaching the date for the publication of their next Virteezer or monthly newsletter. This Virteezer contains pieces such as poems, short stories, mind puzzles, and any other submission of creative writing. It also displays artwork, bucket lists, and great holiday recipes. The December Virteezer displayed a short story and poem based on the holidays, a winter bucket list of potential activities, and recipes. Students can also submit other pieces to Ms. Aitchison, the head of the club. The Virteezers are posted in English classes and students have access to them online as well.

The Newspaper Club is proud to present their newly published page in the *Chronicle* each month, featuring stories which are also published here in the school's newspaper. *The Panther Press* is accessible to E.O. students and parents online. Students can contact the advisor, Mr. Kennedy, if they want to contribute.

"The participation has been excellent this year," Mr. Kennedy said. "We have had contributors from every class submitting many different types of articles. The paper is up and running thanks to a group of students who re-ignited the club last year, including current members Henry Willis, Griffin Ryan, and Kyle Escott."



The E.O. Smith Poetry Club donated a large, decorated wreath to "The Festival of Trees and Tradition," the Wadsworth Atheneum's annual fundraiser event. The student design was entitled "Words of Winter" and featured ornaments decorated with stanzas from selected winter-themed poems.

Want to Join the Panther Press?

For more information contact our advisor

Mr. Kennedy at ckennedy@eosmith.org or

Editor-in-Chief Griffin Ryan at ryang19@eosmith.org

Leadership Positions available for 2019-20 school year,

so contribute now!



Winter Concerts Warm Holiday Season

By Lindsay Haukom
Class of 2021

December is a busy month for everyone, but, in particular, the holiday season is busy for musicians. The E.O. Smith High School music department held two holiday concerts: the Chamber Music concert on December 11, and the Winter Celebration Concert on December 20.

The annual Chamber Music Concert is a smaller, more cozy holiday concert. This year, it was held in The Packing House/Mill Works in Willington and the performance consisted of chamber choirs, other instrumental chamber ensembles, and even a few soloists. E.O. Smith's Chamber Singers, a smaller, elite choir directed by Mrs. Amanda Hanzlik, opened the concert with "Ana El Na," a Hebrew prayer. They went on to sing "Personent Hodie," a 14th century Latin carol.

Then, E.O. Smith's Cello Quartet, comprised of Alexandria Bober, Jaiden Hathaway, Boris Moscardelli, and Isabelle White, performed "Rockelbel's Canon," the Piano Guys' upbeat arrangement of Pachelbel's Canon. The E.O. Smith Women's Choir, directed by Mrs. Hanzlik, sang a beautiful rendition of "Winter Song," composed by Sara Bereilles and Ingrid Michaelson. The solos in this piece were sung by Madison Young, Rebecca Drake, Lindsay Irvine, and Jaiden Hathaway. The E.O. Smith String Quartet, featuring Brian Hu, Aaron Kaufold, Amy Wei, and Grace Nieh, performed the third movement (Scherzo) of *Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18, n4*.

At that point, a couple of soloists performed. Lindsay Haukom performed on harp "O Holy Night" by Adolphe Adam (arranged for harp by Daniel Burton). Following that performance, Anatole Keshwani played an excerpt from *Beriot's Fantasie ou Scene de Ballet*. He had an outstanding performance that showed how much time, effort, and hard work he put into that piece!

Musicians, Singers

Strike Perfect Note

The Chamber Singers took the stage again and sang "Season of Light," a beautiful piece composed by Hartford's Jacob Narverud. The sweet dissonance of the chords and the use of Major 7ths give that song a warm, cozy feel. To close the concert, the choir sang "Silent Night" by Franz Gruber (arranged by Matthew Culloton) to celebrate the 200th year anniversary of "Silent Night." The choir was accompanied by Kristine Johnson on the flute along with Lindsay Haukom on the harp. It was a beautiful arrangement and a perfect close to the concert.

The annual Winter Celebration Concert is always fun holiday concert that families enjoy. It was held at UConn's Von Der Mehden Concert Hall and included performances of the jazz band, the choirs, and the symphony orchestra. The E.O. Jazz Band, directed by Mr. Anthony Pandolfe, opened the concert with "Let It Snow." The soloists were Matt Baker on the trumpet, Sutton Fransen on the alto sax, Ben Twiss on the trombone, Autumn Mahoney on the tenor sax, Raven Dest on the piano, and Zach Scruggs on the guitar. Then, they welcomed Caroline Duers to the stage to sing "Santa Baby" with them. Duers sounded amazing and brightened up the holiday spirit with her voice. The junior recently won the Windham Regional Arts Council Young Artist Competition; she will perform with the Willimantic Orchestra in the spring.

Next, the E.O. Smith Symphony Orchestra performed the annual tradition of "Sleigh Ride" (arranged by Leroy Anderson), and we were conducted by Mr. Pandolfe.

"It was wonderful to work with all of our musicians together as a collaborative group representing many styles," Mr. Pandolfe said. "I look forward to another inspiring concert to come."

Then Mr. Scott Chaurette conducted us in the "Holiday Children's March," Mr. Chaurette and Merle J. Isaac's cute arrangement of holiday tunes.

"It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to work with such fine student musicians," said Mr. Chaurette, the Fine Arts Director. "I am so proud of the work they put into both of these concerts."

Then, E.O. Smith's Chamber Singers took the stage for "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind" by John Rutter, a slow, beautiful piece. The Chamber Singers performed with the strings from the Symphony Orchestra, harp, and Richard Cooper on the piano and were conducted by Mrs. Hanzlik, Director of Choirs. The full Concert Choir joined the Chamber Singers on stage, and they went on to sing "Ding Dong Merrily on High," "Season of Light," "Personent Hodie," and "Carol of the Bells."

Next, E.O. Smith's Symphony Orchestra and Concert Choir performed "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" together. It was a beautiful arrangement for choir and orchestra by Mark Hayes. Alaina Magaldi and Jonathan Paquin sang a duet together partway through the song, and they sounded absolutely amazing. To close the concert, Mr. Pandolfe conducted the Symphony Orchestra and Choirs in the "Hallelujah Chorus," which is part of Handel's *Messiah*. It is an annual tradition, and we welcomed E.O. Smith alumni to the stage to sing with us.

The E.O. Smith Music Department gave two wonderful concerts this season that brought holiday spirit to the many audience members. It is great being able to have such a supportive music department and team of music directors who make it possible for every music student to get together and perform for the public. Bringing other people joy through their musical abilities is one of my favorite things about being a musician, and I'm sure many other musicians feel that way.

19 in 19: Reading Runs Rampant

By ABIGAIL LEVINE
CLASS OF 2021

E.O. Smith kicked off its annual 19-19 Reading Challenge in mid-October 2018, and more than 10% of the school has entered. The reading challenge is a great opportunity for students to embrace their love of reading.

Mrs. Larkin, the school librarian, is the supervisor for this challenge. "The purpose of the 19 in 19 was to try to promote and grow a stronger reading culture here at E.O. It is a personal challenge," she said, adding, "I would love everyone who enters to challenge themselves to read at least one more book than they did last year."

The goal for the 19-19 Reading Challenge is to read 19 books by the end of the school year in 2019. Each month, students report the books that they read with 120 students reading approximately 250 books as the start of February. They do this by seeing Mrs. Larkin in the Library Media Center (LMC) and answering a few questions about the book.

Some popular books among teens have been *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, and *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. Other books are Nutmeg Nominees, including *Illuminae* by Amie Kaufman, *Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson, *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman, *The Female of the Species* by Mindy McGinnis, *The Serpent King* by Jeff Zentner, and *Six of Crows* by Leigh Bardugo.

Those who reach the goal of 19 are entered to win a free Chromebook, and each month's top readers receive coupons to restaurants in Downtown Storrs such as Dunkin Donuts, Mooyah, and Blaze Pizza. Our "top readers so far are Sander Goemans, Shanze Khan, Grace Carver, Michaela Finn, Tim Hill, Kate Lindsay, Abigail Levine, Katelyn



Possible choices for the LMC's 19 in 19 Book Challenge are on display in the LMC. (Abigail Levine photo)

Mathewson, Julianna Peres, Lyndzy Passmore, Alissa Recchia, and Kira Shepard!

"I like to read all the time," said Goemans, a freshman who has read nearly 50 books so far this year. "It's nice to be rewarded for it. I think I have pushed myself to read more."

Some of this author's favorite books read so far this year are Rae Carson's *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*, *The Crown of Embers*, and *The Bitter Kingdom*. This *New York Times* bestselling trilogy has won three awards, the 2012 Top Ten Best Fiction for Young Adults among them. This series was among my favorites so far this year, and I highly recommend it for other readers as well.

Not only is the LMC a great place to enter books for the reading challenge, it also serves as a quiet place for students to complete their work. Mrs. Larkin says, "the LMC is a place for students to get work done -- whether it's studying, working on homework or a project -- we provide that working environment for our students."



Indoor Track Profile Keegan Santasiere



By Kyle Escott, Class of 2019

Favorites

Movie: *Kings of Summer*

TV: *The Office*

Subject: History

Future Plans: To run in college

What were the goals for this year for the team?

“To get as many people to states as possible. Also to have as many people to qualify deep into the postseason. The team goal is to have everyone improve as best as they can.”

Who are the people who have had the biggest impact for the track team?

“Kobe Stigler, Nate Metsack, Cory Bill Jr., Miranda Graves and Haley Jaquith.”

Class L State Results

Girls: Tied for Sixth (Windsor champion)

Boys: 11th (Xavier champion)

Girls Individual Highlights

Haley Jaquith (1st, pole vault); Valerie Blais (5th, pole vault); Elizabeth Bigelow (3rd, 1600); Miranda Graves (4th, 3200) Elizabeth Rose (7, 3200); Sarah Cao, Jayden Stygar, Bridget Olson, Analiese Hardon (5th, 4x800 Relay).

Boys Individual Highlights

Nathan Metsack (2nd, 600); Cory Bill (4th, 600); Kobe Stigler (4th, long jump); Keegan Santasiere (7th, 1000); Stigler, Metsack; Bill, Santasiere (6th, 1600 relay).

Panthers hockey looking cool on ice



The Panthers were 9-5 entering the first week of February and already tournament bound. Top, they celebrate a goal during a recent game. At left, Owen Stacey fights through traffic to score a goal. Just above, goalie Harry Cook shuts down a goal-scoring opportunity.

Photos by Mrs. Rondeau

Plenty of Hoopla at E.O.



Photos by Mrs. Rondeau



Win Power

The girls varsity started 14-3 thanks to fine play from many standouts. Clockwise from top left, Taylor Golembiewski releases a shot; Taylor Verboven and Ni'asha Greene defend as Courtney Doherty looks on; Verboven and Doherty close in on a shooter. The junior varsity started 11-5. At bottom left, Olivia Verboven reaches for the ball as Hazel Salazar supplies defensive support. The program's three teams started a combined 33-9, which includes a freshmen group that won eight of its first nine.



Coach Loughead and the freshmen boys basketball team overcame an 0-4 start by winning eight of their next 10 games.

Therapy dogs help kids through “ruff” exams



Juniors Kersten Scanlon (above center), Elana Bray (above left) and Jaiden Hathaway (bottom right, center) are among those students who visited with therapy dogs in the Library Media Center. The dogs visited prior to exams to help students decrease stress levels. (Photos by Tim Hill)

Researchers showed single session can have significant effects on well-being of students

**By Tim Hill
Class of 2020**

With exam week approaching, anxiety-ridden, frenetic, and slightly mad students are a customary sight. Midterms are a stressful time for all students -- myself included -- and utilizing healthy ways of coping with this pressure is necessary for better results on exams. On two occasions prior to the start of exams, students were given the opportunity to de-stress through the healing power of therapy dogs.

The idea started last year when school librarian Jennifer Larkin invited Dr. Linda Robinson and her dogs to the school's Library Media Center (LMC); students could pet, talk, and even cuddle with the animals.

"It gave us time to stop and relax," said junior Kersten Scanlon, who went when her teacher, Mr. Timothy Bowen, brought his class. "It's not something I would probably do on my own. If it was just an option, I probably would not have made the time."

Both canines are certified therapy dogs that have joined kids in numerous schools while studying or reading. Dr. Robinson named the dogs Gaus and Vergill -- after characters from the epic poem *Inferno*. Dr. Robinson has been touring schools with her dogs for over 12 years. Both of the dogs are Mini Australian Shepherds with the 5-year-old Gaus a Blue Merle and the 11-year-old Virgil being a Red Tri.

Over the two days in the week prior to midterms, the canines visited students inside the LMC. Mrs. Larkin said her aim was to provide students with as many resources as possible during their exhausting exam preparations.

"It was relaxing, a de-stresser," junior Elana Bray said. "It was a good thing to do before midterms. The dogs were so calm."

This new method of animal assistance to help people cope with stress has become increasingly popular in recent years with several colleges using certified dogs on their campuses.



In a study by Emma Ward-Griffin of the University of British Columbia, researchers showed that a single session can have significant effects on the well-being of students. The students felt increased happiness and energy levels, along with reduced stress following their fluffy, tailing-wagging interactions.

"It was just nice to take a break from school work and pet the dogs," junior Victoria Randazzo said. "It was relaxing."

Exams may have been "ruff" on the students, but Mrs. Larkin is "paws-itive" that the dogs helped ease the stress of students. "Hope-fur-llly," our relaxed friends will return in our next time of need - spring semester finals!