

The Tomahawk

Student Newspaper

Volume 23, Issue 1
December, 2021

“Striving to Be
the Best”

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An Unforgettable Week at Iroquois

By Konstantinos Ntakoulas, *foreign exchange senior*

After a year without Homecoming celebrations, every member of the Iroquois community was excited for this week to arrive. Homecoming is a landmark for every high school student’s year, especially for a Chief. After a rough year with unprecedented changes, a pumping up of spirit revived the school’s morale.

The regular program itself may not have changed, but there were significant differences in the way the activities were scheduled in order to adhere to the Covid restrictions and rules.

Theme days were more special and innovative this year than ever. Student Government came up with five different concept days that most of the students seemed to like, as seen in high participation on each Spirit Day. Starting with Bills Mafia Day, the red and white-themed school turned into blue flooding the hallways with Bills shirts.

Other theme days included Twin Day, Country Day, and the Class Color Day, leading up to Friday’s Spirit Day.

After interviewing many people, most of them said that themed days were the best way to escalate the enthusiasm leading to the Pep Rally, Varsity Football game, and the Homecoming Dance on Saturday night.

Sophomore Megan Aichinger commented, “It was my first-time taking part in the Homecoming Week and it was one of the most fun weeks of the year. Participating with my friends and sharing my experience with them was the part I enjoyed the most.”

Thursday night was the Powder Puff Game between the classes. The Seniors dominated against the other classes, taking first place for a second year in a row. The game was emceed with seniors Kendall Mariacher and Trevor Kent’s commentary, which made the whole experience way more colorful and fun.

A significant moment and change in Iroquois tradition was the Pep Rally, which took place outdoors on the football

field due to Covid precautions. This decision didn’t prevent the school community from enjoying one of the most favored Iroquois events.

The Pep Rally opened with the fall sports teams parading in behind their banners.

Cheerleading, by both the Varsity Cheerleaders as well as the male Powder Puff Cheerleaders, and competitive games between the classes filled the afternoon. “Kiss the Cow” is a newer tradition where Mr. Lysiak, Mr. Dombrowski, and the Superintendent Scofield had to kiss a sweet little calf.

The winners of the Senior Jeans Contest were Isabella Michael and Shannon LaDuca for the best designs. Based upon student votes, Chief and Lady Chief titles were awarded to seniors Trey Kleitz and Ashley Pitz, followed by their court from the lower grades.

The Spirit Award was given to the Seniors for their

See **Homecoming**, page 14

Words of Wisdom from the Class of 2021

By Olivia Nuwer, *senior*

High school is said to be the best four years of your life, a time to be involved and enjoy opportunities while you’re still young. Those who have come before understand that there are so many people that will come and go through your life, and that it is important to live in the moment.

The Iroquois graduating Class of 2021 knows this all too well! As a group, they lost so many of the major high school milestones due to Covid, but they remained strong and stuck together to see things through until the end.

Since these are the years that one learns some of life’s most important lessons, the

Iroquois Seniors were asked to respond to a few questions about favorite moments and words of wisdom that they wanted to impart to the underclassmen.

Before the pandemic, yes, people still complained about having to go to school, but the small events were able to keep our heads up and smiling. These Seniors had various favorite memories during their high school career that they reflected upon.

“I think the best memory I have from Iroquois is going to Winter Ball and Homecoming,

See **Graduate Advice**, page 9

Teens Effectuated by Gas Prices

By Luca Schmidt, foreign exchange senior

The current price of gasoline is a commonly discussed topic among people, and most are complaining about it without knowing the real cause. Indeed, the price now for a gallon of gasoline in New York State is over \$3.30, while it was \$1 less a year ago. Prices are haven't been this high since 2008.

Because the prices have always been relatively low compared to other countries around the globe, the increase was jaw-dropping. Many attribute it to the decision by President Biden, while others are blaming Trump, since the prices started going up during his presidency.

Biden suspended the Keystone XL Pipeline, which Trump started, but that will have effects only about 10 years from now and not on the current gas prices, according

to Forbes.com. A rise of gas prices did not only occur in the U.S., but in most of the countries across the globe. Therefore, it seems that no one is to blame because the main cause has been the Covid pandemic.

When the first lockdown occurred and everyone was trapped at home, there was an overproduction of gas, and since no one bought gas at the time, the prices fell drastically. Companies nearly gave away gas for free because of the storage costs. Oil prices, which are strictly correlated to gasoline prices, went up and almost tripled from May 2020 to December 2020, and President Trump was not to blame for this. It was the economy that began to open from the shutdown.

See Gas Prices, page 12

Sharks Take Over Iroquois

By Jacob Cantie, alumnus

The sharks were circling, but one team survived!

Mr. Whalen's Entrepreneurship class hosted their own *Shark Tank* Competition, where students were able to pitch their business ideas to a real judging panel of three successful local entrepreneurs to and compete for \$500!

VBC's famous show *Shark Tank* challenges new entrepreneurs to pitch their product and business plan to a high-powered panel of successful American business executives. Since the winner earns a contract for production, the opportunity is pursued by many ambitious start-ups, but very few make it out successfully with an offer.

Here at Iroquois this past spring, 14 students competed in teams of two to present an idea for a business endeavor. Students agreed that it was a suspenseful and educational event that many were able to take part in.

Whalen, an Iroquois Business teacher, has been teaching the Entrepreneurship course at the high school for the last 12 years. He based the concept off the TV show as a fun event for his students to participate in.

The competition started as an "elevator pitch." The concept was based on if you were on an elevator presenting your business idea to an important individual, your conversation would have to be efficiently spoken within the given time of an elevator ride. So, students were challenged on making that effective sales pitch.

This concept evolved into the *Shark Tank* Competition for Iroquois students to inventively pitch their ideas and demonstrate their products for the judges.

The judges consisted of three local successful entrepreneurs that Mr. Whalen has known throughout the years. Whalen was very pleased on how the event unfolded this year. The contest was held in the auditorium, which was an ideal location and will now be held there each year.

The students presented many unique business ideas. Winners were awarded \$500 for first place and \$250 for second place.

The award money was donated by local businesses such as Anderson Financial Services, M & M U-Pull It Inc., and General Welding.

"Every year there are always those kids that go above and beyond," Whalen stated.

Former senior Ryan Current worked alone and earned second place in the *Shark Tank* Competition. He was enthralled by the competition that he spent months preparing for. Originally, he wasn't signed up for the Entrepreneurship class at Iroquois. When the Computer Science class was cancelled, Current decided to enroll in this course instead.

See Shark Tank, page 12

Caffeine on the Teen Brain

By Bri Turpin, senior

There is an epidemic taking over high schools and sweeping the nation. Caffeine addiction has affected around 83% of teens in America. This addiction can cause issues such as irritability and behavioral trouble for users.

For most teens, dependency starts young with drinking coffee to feel more like an adult, or having an energy drink to stay awake after studying for a test all night. The problem is this is an addiction that is seen so often in youth today that it often goes unnoticed as even being a problem that needs to be addressed.

Many teenagers will have a power drink or a cup of coffee on a daily basis. *Medical News Today* states that 96% of all teens will drink caffeinated beverages at least occasionally. Still, it is hard to avoid when popular trends lean in that direction. The world is covered in advertisements of the latest fun flavors of popular energy drinks or fancy coffees.

Caffeine makes the world spin, and an occasional drink will not hurt anybody. The problem starts when the average teenager is seen carrying a cup of coffee to their first class at school every day of their lives. Whether it is from a coffee shop or made at home, many have trouble surviving the day without their dose.

Sydney Strickland, a senior at Iroquois High School, says she will drink a cup or more of coffee a day and only gets around 20 hours of sleep weekly. People are recommended to get 8-10 hours of sleep a day, but Strickland is seen only getting an average of 4 hours.

See Caffeine, page 12

Border Crossings

By Emma Wilson, senior

In the hard-hitting months of Covid, people were only able to cross the Canadian border for dire essential reasons. Stated by USA facts, 66% of New York's population has been fully vaccinated. Due to this, the strictness of the border has relaxed. Changes have occurred in the border crossing enabling more travelers to cross. Citizens have waited more than a year and a half to travel freely. Regular travelers are relieved to say it's about time.

According to *The Buffalo News*, the U.S. side of the Canadian border will open on November 8, 2021, approximately 3 months after the Canadian side opened on August 9, 2021. Children will be able to cross, even though they are too young to be vaccinated. All children and adults do require a negative Covid test, taken within 72 hours for valid entry into Canada.

A period of 16 months of no travel between the two countries obviously had an impact on normalcy. This halt has made it difficult for people in both countries. People who live on one side, but work on the other, could not commute to work or go at all. For citizens of the U.S. who own property on the Canadian side, they could not

See Canada, page 9

Borrow a Book—and Read!

By Isabella Thomas, *alumnus*

We’ve all had someone say to us, “You need to put down your phone; it’ll rot your brain.”

You might roll your eyes and put it down, but chances are you’ll wind up picking it up again a few minutes later. Whoever said that to you doesn’t understand that we use our phones as more than just a communication device; it is also a form of entertainment. Social media, games, even the internet itself, all can be used to keep our mind occupied.

In some way, those people do have a point. Those mindless apps aren’t stimulating your brain very much. They’re simply distractions. But, is there a way to be on your phone, and not doing something mindless?

Well, of course, there is.

The answer is simply reading.

There are many ways you can read on your phone, laptop, or other devices, but the school provides one for us: Sora.

Sora is essentially an online library. You can borrow and return books, similar to how you would at the school or public library. The only difference is, it’s all virtual.

Mrs. Freatman, the School Librarian, explains, “Sora is an eBook and audiobook program. You can borrow books at any time from any type of device. Sora offers thousands of books in all different genres.”

When asked about the advantages of reading virtually, Freatman said, “Reading an eBook offers great flexibility. By loading

See **Reading** page 11

Storming the Capitol Building

By Grace Kwiatkowski, *alumnus*

The year 2020 made history with a worldwide pandemic and an important American election, but no one could guess what the start of 2021 would bring the United States.

On January 6, 2021, rioters stormed the Capitol Building. In Washington D.C., many people had gathered for a Trump Rally just outside the White House. Meanwhile, Congress began proceedings to certify the Electoral College vote. Soon, people from the Trump Rally started to gather around the Capitol Building, shouting protests.

Police gathered around trying to calm the crowds when things started to become violent. Both sides were using chemicals against each other and rumors of a pipe bomb began circulating. More and more rioters began gathering and it became too much for the police. Rioters broke through all physical barriers to the Capitol and entered the building.

By this time, Congress had called a recess in hearing the violence outside. Rioters chased police up to the Senate chamber and police quickly scrambled to lock the doors from the inside. Some members of Congress were able to escape, but some were stuck inside listening to rioters’ pound on the doors, trying to get in. After three hours, the building was officially secure. The whole situation resulted in 5 deaths.

The Capitol Building has been attacked throughout history on multiple occasions for people to make a point or just cause widespread panic and destruction.

In 1814, British forces attacked by setting fire to the Capitol Building, along with the White House and many other buildings. This attack was in retaliation for Americans setting fire to the Canadian capital at York the year before. At the time, the Capitol Building housed the Library of Congress, so the fire ended up burning 3,000 books. The famous dome on top of the Capitol wasn’t built yet, as the building was still in construction. Surprisingly, a tornado saved the day by striking Washington D.C. and putting out all the fires the British had set. The government had to fix all damages that were made.

The next attack on the Capitol Building happened on March 1, 1954. Four people entered the Capitol with handguns with no trouble, as there was little security in those days. One member then shot at a group of lawmakers while shouting in support of Puerto Rican independence.

Five Congressmen were wounded before security were able to get a hold of the attackers. The four shooters were tried and sentenced to Federal prison, until Jimmy Carter took the presidency and granted the shooters clemency, or mercy, to ease international pressure. After this instance, secu-

See **Capitol** page 8

Inevitable Evolution of Entertainment

By Zechariah Franklin, *alumnus*

Some forms of entertainment stick around for centuries, but new forms of entertainment are constantly being invented and reinvented to appeal to our rapidly evolving interests and short attention spans. YouTube has become one of the most common sources for entertainment for many people in 2020. The diversity of content on this video sharing platform is incredibly unique. YouTube is the best place to go for tutorials on how to change your oil, gaming content, and everything in between.

In ancient society, entertainment was predominantly found in spectating fights, listening to live music, and attending banquets. Fast forward several centuries to 1888, the first film was made. This, paired with the television, became the basis of today’s primary source of entertainment, the most revolutionary form of entertainment to ever be seen. The diversity and creativity of the television changed the arts and pop culture industries in a way that had never been done before.

There were 40,613 movie theater screens in the U.S. as of 2019 that generated over 11 billion dollars in revenue that year alone. The following year, movie theaters brought in a staggeringly low profit of 2 billion dollars, which can be attributed to the pandemic closing all non-essential businesses.

However, this begs the question: what entertained people during this time? Due to the lockdown, the demand for entertainment had never been higher.

The easy answer: online streaming, but in different formats. However, it’s not just movie streaming sites that had exponential growth in traf-

See **Entertainment**, page 11

Food Service Is Not Easy Work

By Avery Mengay, *senior*

Ever since the pandemic began, the cafeteria employees have been working hard to pack up and deliver lunches to children throughout the district. Not only are they providing Iroquois students with food, but also anyone under 18 years of age that lives within the Iroquois school district, even if they go to a different school.

According to Personal Touch employee Amy Mengay, during the hybrid learning they packed about four hundred bags of food per week. The bags have either two or three days’ worth of food for both breakfast and lunch. Around a hundred of these were delivered directly to the houses, while the rest were for pick-up. In addition to the packing and delivering, the workers served about a hundred and thirty hot meals to kids in school.

These diligent workers have had their fair share of issues to deal with, and it hasn’t been easy. For instance, just obtaining the necessary supplies to prepare and serve the food has been difficult. Lisa Valentin, Food Service Director of the district, gave the example of paper products. Everyone needs them, which means they’re on backorder a

See **Food Service**, page 8

Procrastination: A Student Disease

By Veljko Rakic, *foreign exchange senior*

Procrastination, or in simple words a complete waste of time is a disease that every student suffers from at least once a day. The most common symptoms are marathon watching unrelated videos, checking social media or pretending something is more important. Even the famous Leonardo Da Vinci spent 16 years painting Mona Lisa and never completed it!

What kind of student procrastinators are there? With the list we bring you, find out what type of slacker you are and ways to overcome your bad habits.

In a survey that was done at Iroquois Central High School, 20 students were asked if they procrastinate and if they consider themselves procrastinators. Results shows that 80 percent of them engage in procrastination; 75 percent consider themselves procrastinators; and almost 40 percent procrastinate consistently and problematically.

Three main reasons of procrastination students listed were: phone (social media), lack of energy, and lack of motivation. Most of the issues regarding procrastination are not related to the task that has to be done, but to the psychology and the mood of the person doing it.

Dr. Roy Baumeister, a psychologist from University of Florida states, "Human self-control is a resource like any other, so it is easily consumed. When exhausted, people usually choose one of two options—doing something that has to be done or indulging in something that relaxes."

See **Procrastination**, page 10

Guide to Area Museums

By Paige Aichinger, *senior*

If you're looking for something fun to do this fall, there's plenty to do right here in our own backyard!

Take a drive around WNY and you may not see anything out of the ordinary, but if you take a closer look there are many fascinating places to visit! Whether it's the Science Center or the Jell-O Factory, there is something for everyone.

Driving downtown, you may notice a sign that says **Pierce-Arrow**. To many that means nothing; however, it is a transportation museum showcasing vintage vehicles. Located on 263 Michigan Avenue at 201 Seneca, the **Pierce-Arrow Museum** is all about early and high class automobiles.

This museum is extremely unique. It gives focus to the transportation history specifically in Buffalo. It features the highly luxurious and rare Pierce Arrow automobiles, made here in Buffalo, and Thomas Flyer (a racer who won the 1908 New York to Paris Race). It also showcases electric vehicles, vintage bicycles, motorcycles, trucks, muscle cars and more!

The cost for adults and seniors is \$12 a person and for children 13 and under it's \$5. They also offer guided tours for \$25 per person for 30 minutes. They are open on Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

If that's not for you, then maybe you want a more family-friendly attraction to visit. The **Jell-O Factory and Gallery** is the perfect place for the kids, especially since it is so cost effective for a family.

It's \$5 for adults and a \$1.50 for kids ages 6-11 (5 and under are free!). The hours are varied, so make sure to check them out beforehand.

The history of this museum is rooted right in LeRoy, which is 29 minutes away from Rochester! The invention of Jell-O was truly an accident. A carpenter named Pearle Wait was experimenting with a cough remedy and laxative tea in his home. He was trying his luck with gelatin and then came up with the fruit flavored dessert, and the rest is history!

There are so many attractions that you may want to spend the day, ranging from their original ads to recipe books! Boring is the last thing this museum is! One reviewer states, "Such an amazing little museum! I got so wrapped up in the awesomeness of this museum that I left with a lobster-shaped mold."

They're open April 1 through December 31 on Mondays through Saturdays. Those hours are from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Sundays from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. If those days don't work, don't fret; they are open January 1 through March 31 on all weekdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Maybe you're into history and want to learn more about some local stories that impacted our region. The **Buffalo History Museum** is the place

See **Museums**, page 14

Students Start Sports News Source

By Cal McTigue, *senior*

A group of local students has created their own brand based on Buffalo sports news and updates. Iroquois senior Jaden Ellis and three other students from outside the district started the brand, now known as Buffalo Sports Center or BSC for short. They cover breaking news from all the Buffalo sports teams, mainly focusing on the Bills and Sabres.

The news source posts articles about Buffalo sports teams on their Instagram and post short videos and podcasts on their YouTube channel. Instagram is a social media platform that allows people to post photos with a description or article underneath. The students have had rapid success and have already built over 2,200 followers on Instagram and over 700 subscribers on YouTube.

According to a worker for the company, BSC is close to being able to earn money from advertisements and has partnered with several brands, including Yoke and local shops to promote and earn revenue.

They typically record broadcasts and upload photos or posts Wednesdays through Sundays from 4 p.m. until 10 p.m. with the team at BSC to create podcasts and interviews. Former Buffalo Sabre and Rochester American Casey Nelson enjoyed his time working with BSC.

Nelson stated, "The podcast was entertaining and was refreshing to see the next generation of Sabres fans." He later said, "I followed BSC on Instagram and enjoy their news stories and updates."

Former Buffalo Sabre Rob Ray also has connections to the group. Ray often messages the group his opinions on certain Sabres players and

See **Buffalo Sports**, page 13

Free Lunch for Everyone!

By Maggie Darmstedter, *senior*

Over the past year and a half, many of things have changed throughout the building of our school. However, an example of something that changed the most is the school lunches. Lunch procedures are different, but the options have expanded beyond years past.

Personal Touch Services has one of the most important jobs within each school to serve the hungry students and staff daily. Diane Keller has worked as a part of the cafeteria staff at Iroquois Central School District since 1992.

"Because of Covid, the lunches are free right now. More people are getting lunches. With it being free, it helps," Keller said.

There have been more options for students this year than ever before.

In the year of 2020, New York State had announced a \$880 million temporary food assistance program for schools all over the state. With this government relief for education, students were able to get free lunch from the cafeteria to help aid families during the pandemic. Lunches were also able to be picked up by remote students during the mornings in the lobby.

See **Free Lunch**, page 13

Looking for a Job?

By Jack Baiocco, *senior*

Are you a high school student looking for a job? Many Iroquois High School students are currently employed or trying to find a job. Those who are looking for a job might be surprised that numerous companies and businesses are hiring many new positions because they are short staffed.

According to Indeed.com, some local businesses that are looking to hire are Shoe Carnival, Gold Fish Swim School, Panera Bread, Chipotle, Valvoline Instant Oil Change, YMCA, Big Lots, American Eagle, and many more.

According to jobs2careers.com, some job openings are Amazon warehouse team, Umbra order picker, UPS warehouse worker, Chipotle restaurant team member, Kohls retail salesperson, Panera Bread cashier, Educational Playcare kitchen assistant, FedEx warehouse package handler, and The Buffalo Club housekeeper.

The average income in Erie County is \$60,652 for 2019, \$53,333 for 2020, and \$79,188 for 2021. Companies are desperate for more employees and are paying more because they are short staffed. These businesses are struggling because of the lack of workers since Covid started. This is a problem because businesses are shutting down and not getting materials needed to perform their work.

Jason Galluzzi, senior, is employed at Berner Farms, a local business that grows and sells produce and landscaping products. Galluzzi says he likes working outdoors and his co-workers are respectful and hard working. He would recommend this job to anyone who likes manual labor.

Paige Aichinger, a senior at Iroquois, is employed at EduKids, says she loves to play with the children after school every day from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Aichinger was previously employed at Tim Hortons. She says it was difficult dealing with customers in the morning and she is glad she made the switch to EduKids. Aichinger is planning on becoming an early childhood teacher and this job will get her ready for her career path she is taking.

It is also important to find a job that relates to something you are interested in. Having an enjoyable job will make it feel less like work and more interesting for you. As a teen, it is also important to save your money.

According to moneyunder30.com, some ways to start building income are to start a savings account; separate spending money and savings money; keep track of purchases; have parents help; do chores (if you get an allowance); spend smartly, and start a decent paying job to earn money.

As a teen, now is the best time to earn and save money because the tax bracket is often lower for teens than adults, so you won't pay as much for now. It is also a great time to find jobs because many businesses are looking for new employees.

The Price of Fast Fashion

By Isabella Michael, *senior*

In the most recent years, fashion trends have surged in and out of popularity at a much faster rate than ever seen before. Fast Fashion is known as inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends. One of the most popular sites for purchasing these articles of clothing, shoes, and other accessories is *Shien*. However, with these prompt mood swings of fashion trends, we must ask ourselves, at what cost?

You may think that the goods you are purchasing off these foreign-based manufacturing sites are not going to make an impact because you're just one person. However, is it worth the larger impacts that this industry is having on the world? The pollution that is caused from the chemical materials being used to make them so cheaply and is quickly adding to the environmental burden. In addition, think about the child labor that was used while the manufacturing your shirt. All of these factors are having greater negative influence on the world around us.

Have you stopped yourself and begun to think about if you would still believe the accessories you were planning to purchase will still be cute or enroute of the trends in six months? How about one year? Three years? Will this cheap manufacturing fall upon the backbone of corrupt labor? Then, will it further taint the environment after it's thrown into the trash, failing to decompose due to its chemical make-up?

The New York Times says, "More than 60 percent of fabric fibers are now synthetics, derived from fossil fuels, so if and when our clothing ends up in a landfill, it will not decay."

See *Fast Fashion*, page 13

Girls' Swim Closes Strong

By Matthew Sitarek, *junior*

Fall sports have had much athletic success to start the school year. Girls Varsity Swimming finished their season 4-4; however, impressive individual performances prove much greater than their record.

The 200 yard medley relay, which consists of all 4 strokes in competitive swimming, was swum by Sophia Sellan, Melanie White, Sophia Nazarevych, and Elizabeth Yandricha. Similarly, the 200 yard freestyle relay featured the same swimmers who placed in the top 5 overall at ECICs. Two Iroquois divers also came in the top 5.

An impressive race in the 50 yard freestyle from senior White put her in 2nd place, missing the top position by less than a quarter of a second. These performances placed the girls' team 7th in ECIC Division II.

A week later at Class B Championships, White did it again in the 50 yard freestyle and the 100 yard breaststroke, taking home 3rd place finishes as well as a personal best time.

Junior Ava Cimini placed 5th in diving, followed closely behind by 8th grader Olivia

See *Girls' Swimming*, page 10



Iroquois Unified Polar Plunge Team Friday, Dec. 3

- Raised over \$13,000 for the Special Olympics New York State!
- Won the Cool School Challenge again!
- First school team in New York State history to raise over \$10,000!

The Rise of Fantasy Sports

Owen Szeglowksi, *alumnus*

Ever since Covid-19 removed spectators from most sports, fantasy leagues have been on the rise. The most obvious example of this is fantasy football, filling the void of tailgating parties, and the thrill of watching games from the stands in the freezing cold. While the football season may be over, don't fret: hockey, basketball, and even baseball are just getting started.

Before getting too deep into potential options to pass time that live sports have left you with, let's review this year's fantasy football season. Fantasy football first began around 1997, when CBS started the first official league, but it really started to pick up in the early 2000s and has been on the rise ever since. The basic idea is that captains, that's us, draft players onto our fantasy team and play against each other every week. Points are earned based off how well the individual players do each week.

The concept is fairly simple, but it is taken incredibly seriously, with millions of people competing and preparing for their head-to-head each week. While numbers for fantasy leagues are hard to gauge because most people play in unofficial, private leagues with their friends, it is estimated that this year had the most fantasy players of all time, with over 60 million people playing in North America alone.

One of the most interesting aspects of fantasy football are the people who play it. This year, a large portion of the Avengers cast played in a massive charity fantasy football league with hundreds of thousands of dollars on the line. The famous actors and directors, like Chris Evans and Robert Downey Jr., duked it out over social media in order to drum up more hype over the league.

The winner of the league was Chris Pratt, who portrays Star Lord in the iconic movies. Pratt's charity of choice, Special Olympics Washington, was donated \$190,000 in his honor.

Iroquois senior, Jakob Syracuse, played fantasy football in a casual league this year with some friends from out of state. Since it was a causal league, there were no costs to play or embarrassing punishments for the loser. Syracuse said, "Fantasy football made me watch more games, other than the Bills games that I watch every week. I saw fantasy football as a largely enjoyable experience, teaching me more about the logistics of the sport and the planning required to assemble a team that works in tandem." He plans to play again next year, taking his experience from this year, his first time playing, in order to perform better.

Now if you're reading this and are disappointed you missed out on the awesomeness that is fantasy football, don't worry! While football is over, several other sports, specifically, hockey and basketball, are just starting. Their fantasy leagues are predicted to be bigger and better than ever.

Hockey is probably the easiest gateway into the pastime, due to the length of the season and game schedule. However, if you are basketball's biggest fan and have the time for fantasy basketball, nothing is more fulfilling for a captain than winning the season.

Trail Groups

Group A (Choose **FIVE (5)** trails)

☐ Artpark State Park

☐ Bond Lake County Park

☐ Buckhorn Island State Park

☐ Devil's Hole State Park

☐ Golden Hill State Park

☐ Lockport Nature Trails

☐ Royalton Ravine County Park

☐ Whirlpool State Park

Group B (Choose **FIVE (5)** trails)

☐ Chestnut Ridge County Park

☐ Eighteen Mile Creek Country Park

☐ Finger Lakes Trail (Holland Ravines)

☐ Franklin Gulf County Park

☐ Hunters Creek County Park

☐ Knox Farm State Park

☐ Tift Nature Preserve

☐ Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve

Group C (Choose **FIVE (5)** trails)

☐ Allegany State Park (Mt. Tuscaora)

☐ Deer Lick Nature Preserve

☐ Erie County Bureau of Forestry

☐ Griffis Sculpture Park

☐ Little Rock City State Forest

☐ Sprague Brook County Park

☐ Zoar Valley MUA (Holcomb Pond)

☐ Zoar Valley MUA (Valentine Flats)

Group D (Choose **FIVE (5)** trails)

☐ Beaver Meadow Audubon Center

☐ Darien Lakes State Park

☐ Earl Cardot Eastside Overland Trail

☐ Fred J. Cusimano Westside Overland Trail

☐ Genesee County Park & Forest

☐ Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge

☐ Letchworth State Park (Finger Lakes Trail)

☐ Letchworth State Park (Gorge Trail)

Bonus (Optional)

☐ Chimney Bluffs State Park

☐ Stoney Brook State Park

SPORTS

Walking Around WNY

Hayden Griebel, *alumnus*

Throughout the pandemic, many people have looked for new activities to pursue. This is somewhat difficult seeing as lots of places were shut down and restrictions were put into place. Outdoor activities, including hiking, became very popular during the early months of quarantine; however, living in Buffalo means the weather can be an issue at times. You never know whether it is going to be a sunny forty-degree day or if it will be fifteen degrees, snowing and cloudy.

Despite this, Western New York created a hiking challenge on numerous trails. This challenge encouraged individuals, couples, friends, and families to complete twenty trails. There were thirty-two participating parks including two bonus parks for people to hike on. Hikers were encouraged to post a selfie on social media at the location of their hike, as well as placing a picture on the submission page.

Participating in these hikes were a way for people to stay in shape and get out of the house for a change of scenery. Challengers were able to see other people's progress on a Challenge Board.

Hiking is an easy way to stay active and in shape. There are difficult hikes and easy, leisurely ones that everyone can enjoy. With the spring season rolling around the corner, it is a good time to get outside and try new hikes. There are several state parks and parks in your local community with trails and walkways that are easily accessible.

For nature lovers there are off the beaten path options, as well as creek walks that can be adventurous and fun. Most parks also welcome our furry best friends, which is a great way for them to be out and about, so they are not running around your house crazy.

Whether it's a sunny winter day or the cold melting into spring, the hiking challenge can be a year-round activity. Being active promotes a healthy lifestyle, and the Challenge Western New York is just a shove out the door and encouragement for people.

See the adjacent Challenge Board to check out these great hikes on your own. See how many you can accomplish this year!

Sound of Music Returns!

By Cordelia Thomas, *sophomore*

It's been roughly two years since the High School Choir's performance before Covid-19. March 5, 2020, was the day of the Sacred Music Concert; little did they know it would be their last performance for about a year.

The previous school year was obviously different for everyone. However, the impact that Covid-19 had on the music department was destructive to the bands and choirs. In the beginning of the school year, the NY State Guidelines said to keep a 12 feet distance for all musicians, meaning you stand 12 feet apart from every person with your mask on.

Throughout this time the choir was forced to move into the auditorium at 12 feet away. Then, back to Mr. Gastle's room with still 6 feet apart, including masks. Yet, our music department still managed to put on a concert throughout all this madness and after over a year.

The concert was held on May 19, in the auditorium. Pre-forming was the Chorale, Treble Tones, Tritones, Concert Choir, and finally Swing Choir. The Seniors preformed both "The Star Spangle Banner" at the beginning of the concert and a song from Hercules, "Go The Distance" at the end of the Concert Choir.

The audience only contained the Seniors' parents. Using the same live stream that the Athletic Department uses, we were also able to stream this performance to the parents and family members at home.

According to Seth Wyzykowski, "I was kind of nervous. Of course, why wouldn't I be? It was exciting though; we finally got to have a concert."

Unlike most freshmen at their first High School concert, many of the upperclassmen have been waiting for this for a long time. Many said they did very well.

For example, junior Aurelia Chudy, who is in every choir available, stated how exited for this concert she was and how she has been looking forward to it for about a

year.

Former senior Charity Pickering also said, "I feel we did pretty well. We blended well considering the 6 feet apart."

Many of the freshmen from this past school year stated that they would love to be in the other choirs next year.

For example, Molly Koenig stated, "They were very nice to see. I would like to be in them in the near future."

Grace Czech, who was a freshman, also mentioned, "They were fantastic for being together for such a little amount of time. It sounded like they never missed a day," referring to the Concert and Swing Choir.

Many of the students said how they felt on taking the course. According to a past sophomore,

Caley Carino, "I am very glad I took this class; it is one of the highlights of my day."

Similar to Carino, Braeden Kostusiak stated how he loves to sing, and these classes provided him an outlet to do that very thing. Gastle thought it was important to put on this concert. He shared, "It is what we are all about. I also think it

is important to show the parents how talented and hardworking their children are."

In the concert he also mentioned how he wanted to have the seniors preform one last time.

When Gastle was asked about how he would describe the Class of 2021, he said, "They are very talented and beautiful group of souls. I really enjoyed getting to know them better."

Other students thought that it was important to put on the concert to show the School Board how vital the Music Department is to many students and the Iroquois community. Also, the department wanted to demonstrate how determined they are to get the music groups back to a sense of normalcy.

This performance was pivotal to many people: from the students and the parents and staff, to finally, Superintendent Scofield.

Of course, Gastle noted that he could not put on this performance without the help of the Athletic Department Head, Mrs. Vetter, Administrators, the students, and the custodians. They all played an important role in putting on this concert.

"It is what we are all about. I also think it is important to show the parents how talented and hardworking their children are."

Mr. Gastle



Taking the Stage!

By Victoria Rieman, *senior*

After a year and a half long hiatus, Iroquois High School Drama Club finally graced its presence on the local stage once again on November 12-13 with performances of Don Zolidis' *The Election*.

The Election is a satirical comedy that places the antics that occur behind the scenes of a U.S. presidential election into the more familiar setting of a high school student body president election.

The production featured five students in the leading roles: presidential candidates Mark Davenport and Christy Martin; campaign managers Gary McMasters and Karl Merriweather; television news anchor Kyli, and many more students in smaller roles and participating in stage crew.

Senior Elena Calderone, who played Christy, described the show as "unique, funny, and entertaining," to say the least. According to Calderone, *The Election* was "unlike anything Iroquois has done before: it combined live performances and filmed pieces together."

Junior Xavier Canaple, who played Gary, agreed. "The show has great comedy that is unlike anything I've seen in a high school play," Canaple stated. "There are plenty of blink-and-you'll-miss-it moments that will keep you coming back to find them all."

All in all, both actors thought very highly of the show because it engaged all of those who take an interest in politics or were just looking for a good laugh.

Iroquois Drama Club is a place where students from all backgrounds come together to create a living form of art each autumn and spring with the production of the play and musical. For some, they are drawn to participating in the cast,

See **Drama Club**, page 8

Trends in Music

By Madelyn Bruno, *senior*

Just about every American today listens to music, whether it's at work, during exercise, or for relaxation. Music is necessary for most of us in our everyday lives. Classical music is frequently used to relax our minds and pop is used to boost our mood. But, some genres of music are more popular due to changing trends. The popularity of a genre of music highly often depends on the age and regional demographics.

Current trends show high interests in certain genres of music. According to Statista, on a survey of over 19,000 people, pop was the most popular vote with 64%, among an unspecified age bracket. Following the pop music, the big draws were electronic, movie soundtracks, and hip-hop. This survey was global, featuring results from 18 different countries.

Some movie soundtracks make a big splash on the music industry. For example, Disney's 2021 film, *Cruella*, features an all-star line up of musicians and songs from the 60s with ELO and The Doors; 70s with Queen and the Bee Gees, 80s with The Clash and Blondie; then all the way to modern artists like Florence and the Machine. It's a soundtrack that captures the attention of several

See **Popular Music**, page 8

Food Service,

Continued from page 3

lot of the time.

Not only that, but the workers have had to manage the constant changing that Covid regulations and updates have brought on.

"Consistency is a struggle," says Mengay, "... it's difficult to know how many bags are needed each day."

Valentin adds, "One week it's one thing, and you plan, and then the number of people that want food changes drastically."

Whether or not there were students in school played a huge factor in the number of lunches they packed, which has fluctuated quite a bit since March. They even had to pack lunch bags over the summer as well, which is when they were at their busiest. At the height of the closures, they were packing up over twenty-four hundred meals every week, which is twelve hundred bags.

"It's difficult because people don't understand the work and the effort that goes into preparing the meals," Valentin commented.

These workers do more than we think, so keep that in mind the next time you pick up a bag lunch or grab a drink from the cafeteria. A smile and a "thank you" can go a long way.

Drama Club,

Continued from page 2

which entails performing live onstage and may include singing and dancing, along with acting. Meanwhile, others feel like their place is backstage performing duties such as building sets and props in stage crew, operating a lights and sound board in lighting crew, or sewing costumes in costumes crew.

There is little formal training for new students, but experienced students are always more than willing to provide knowledge and advice along the way. No matter the level of experience, there are always jobs in Drama Club for kids who are willing to work and try new things!

When asked about his experience with the program this year, junior Ian Castro, who participated in stage crew, stated, "This club is incredibly well managed. I especially love how flexible our production team is this year with managing schedules, along with respecting everyone's time!"

Junior Quinton Driggs, who presided over most jobs related to stage crew, described his Drama Club experiences this year as "chaotic, but amazing at the same time!"

Many of Drama Club's returning students were excited to return to a sense of normalcy after the untimely cancellation of 2020's *Newsies* and filming last year's production of *Clue! On Stage* without a live audience due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to senior actor Everett Schutt, President of Drama Club and a key actor in numerous roles in *The Election*, "Drama Club has been amazing this year. We are so lucky and excited to put on such awesome shows for everyone!"

With the recent success of *The Election*, Drama Club is now looking forward to performing *The Wedding Singer* as the 2022 spring musical, based on the widely popular 1998 Adam Sandler film. Students are highly encouraged to attend the informational meeting and auditions in December if they are interested in participating in cast or crew!

Popular Music,

Continued from page 7

generations of music fans.

On average, people spent 17.8 hours a week listening to music. The term "pop music" originally comes from the phrase "popular music," generally defined as a genre of music commercially recorded with simple songs that utilize current technology to produce new ideas. Pop music is played everywhere: throughout stores, radio stations, and advertisements, maintaining its popularity. In the year 2000, the top artists were also pop musicians consisting of Coldplay, Alicia Keys, Radiohead, and Beyonce. It emerges as the top genre in popularity.

According to the Billboard 200, most of the popular artists are pop artists as well. Some of the strongest artists on the billboard included Billie Eilish, Drake, Olivia Rodrigo and Doja Cat.

Following these pop artists, many of the classic rock performers show up, including Queen, Fleetwood Mac, and Elton John.

Moving closer to home in WNY, responses differed greatly from the national stage. After doing a survey of over 30 local individuals, the most listened to music genre was, not surprisingly, alternative music, which seems very appropriate since most survey respondents were under the age of 18. Alternative music is defined as music that is performed by artists outside the musical mainstream. Some alternative artists include Lana Del Ray, The Arctic Monkeys, and the Pixies.

Following alternative was country, rock, and hip-hop. Many of the people interviewed noted that rock, specifically classic rock, was their favorite. It's not very surprising, being that classic rock seems to be making a return to our current generation. Another fan-favorite response, country music, seems to mirror the easy going lifestyle and attitude of many students in the EMW area.

Throughout the world, pop music still reigns supreme. However, alternative music, although continually changing over time, still seems to hold its own among the youth. One thing is for certain, music is such an important aspect of our lives that the trends will continue to simply reflect the need for this artistic outlet among societies.

Capitol,

Continued from page 3

rity became much more thorough to prevent similar attacks.

The biggest attack on the Capitol Building was on November 7, 1983, when a bomb exploded in the building.

Years before, leftist groups had made small attacks on the building, but some women broke off from those groups to form their own, the May 19th Communist Organization. They placed a bomb in the Senate Chamber and announced throughout the building that a bomb was about to explode.

The room was deserted when the bomb went off, resulting in no injuries. However, the damages cost around \$250,000. This group had gone on to bomb other government facilities such as an FBI building during which a few members were caught.

According to the Smithsonian, this is the first documented terrorist group made up entirely by women. They started as protesters for anti-war and civil rights, but were soon labeled terrorist organization.

The Capitol Building has been an important symbol for our government and freedom, and many groups attack the building to represent an attack on their freedom.

Americans witnessed a historical event in January this year, but it will not be the last time the Capitol Building is attacked.

Student Film Club Presents:

Christmas Vacation

Thurs., Dec. 9
Movie showing at 4:30
in rm. 215

Open to all students!

Graduate Advice,

Continued from page 1

along with doing indoor and outdoor track,” recalled one student.

Ryan Current said, “My favorite high school memory was participating in Lycoming Wrestling, which is a camp at Houghton College that was open to Iroquois wrestlers. It was a great experience staying in dorms with my friends. One night we pushed all the beds together and had 15 people in one room. We had a riot that night!”

“Homecoming week each year was very memorable because it was one of the only times the whole school came together,” Joey Doraski said. “My best memory at Iroquois sounds cheesy, but it truly is all of my friends that I have here. They are like a second family to me, and I love community we have created here.”

Other shared memories from Seniors were: “Meeting the friends I’ll most definitely have for the rest of my life” and “junior Powder Puff was really fun, even though we lost!”

These memories will forever be a part of these students’ lives and something they will never forget.

Josh Whipple moved here from San Diego during his sophomore year. When asked about his experiences at Iroquois, he said, “You talk to more people here than at a larger school. It’s not overwhelming. There were too many students at my old school, so it was difficult to get to know people. At Iroquois, I got to meet a ton of friends and join some sports teams like football and baseball.”

They are leaving behind some strong advice for the students who are following in their footsteps, a guide to navigating these years of high school before they pass by.

Involvement with classmates and becoming part of the high school culture were popular views among many of the grade 12 respondents.

Seniors strongly encouraged, “Affiliate yourself with everyone” as well as “GET INVOLVED! Memories are made when you are involved with each other.”

Being part of the school experience with different people is important to maintain friendships and it is an important part of creating memories that you will carry with you for the rest of your life.

Emily Gordon reflected on her past years and stated, “One thing that I regret is not participating in more of the activities that the school offered. I wish I would have joined more clubs because I feel that I could have more fun, and it would have looked better as I applied to colleges.”

Many Seniors also mention staying on top of classes and homework because it will make the educational part of the journey so much smoother.

One student noted, “Do your work; it is a challenge to complete homework for many people, but in the end, it is all worth it.”

Another senior stated, “Make sure you always do your homework and study!”

Current, who is graduating in the top 5 of his class, noted, “Don’t be lazy! You only get out what you put into things, so set yourself up for success in whatever you do.”

Doing homework is not for everyone, but it is what will get you through to stay on top of your grades.

The pandemic created incredible stress and anxiety for many Americans, and some students really struggled with this added stress on their learning environment. Being resilient and staying positive were some key points that upperclassmen suggested.

Hayden Griebel had some advice to share for Iroquois students. “You should get involved and take as many classes and electives as you can, even if Guidance tells you that your schedule is full, because you’ll regret missing out on some fun electives. Some classes that I wish that I would have taken were things like Intro to Engineering, Film Analysis, 1989-Present, and Food Science. I feel that some students don’t know about all these interesting electives.”

Joey Doraski also says, “To the underclassmen, live every day to the fullest. You never know what you have until it’s gone.”

Trevor Morris mentions, “Time goes by fast, so cherish the good times you have in school now because you’ll only get one time to be in high school.”

At Iroquois, the students and staff put in their best efforts to make the school setting as enjoyable as it can be. This year, all students and staff were able to realize just how much we enjoyed all the school dances, the pep rallies, the little meetings in the auditorium, or even the simple days where we didn’t have to worry about being social distanced from each other.

Regrettably, they say that hindsight is 20/20. Due to Covid-19, the Class of 2021 unknowingly lost most of their senior year of high school. When asked what they would have done differently to have made the most of their year, Seniors shared some of their regrets.

Mikayla Durkin said, “I wish I were involved with more clubs earlier on. I wish I took more advantage of the memories made at the dances, football games, and spirit weeks.”

Another said, “I would have tried to relish the best parts of Junior year.”

“Make the best with the people you have for the 4 years. It flies by way faster than you’d think,” lamented a graduating student.

No one wanted to have a dreadful year of school, but with the circumstances given, everyone was able to try and make the most of what they were given. These seniors realized that you cannot take any day or year for granted. You must enjoy each year as if it were your last.

One senior said it best and offered sound guidance: “The stress you feel about a test is temporary. You will preserve through the challenging times, for they are the moments that will make you stronger.... A poor grade does not diminish who you are as a person. How you react to that bad grade is a detail in your life that makes you, you. Never for a second care what people think, it is not worth it. If you do not know what you are doing, it’s completely fine because nobody knows what they are doing half the time. You are never going to please everyone; if you are pleased with yourself that is all that matters.”

Canada,

Continued from page 2

maintain the value of their property. If there was a death or child born on one side, it was difficult for family members from the other side to cross. Even Americans who have dual citizenship with a bank account could not cross if need be.

During the holidays and winter months, Canadians cross over to the United States to escape the frigid cold and travel south.

The closing of the border is not only affecting individual people, but businesses too. Published by CBS news, the border closing caused by Covid, “Canceled ferry service on the Olympic Peninsula, caused a \$64 million loss and took 110 jobs.”

The closing of the border caused a halt for normal traffic between the countries affecting accommodating hotels were extremely affected within weeks.

“The hotel industry virtually crashed over the last 10 days. In a period of 48 hours last week, occupancy dropped by 50 per cent across the industry.” Published in the CBC News, Susie Grynol, CEO of the hotel association of Canada.

Likewise for American companies during lockdown, less traffic has led to many retailers out of business. Posted by WKBW, Lord & Taylor went Bankrupt mid-pandemic, in the Walden Galleria mall holding the story 100,000 square feet space since 1992.



Model UN

Iroquois' Model UN Team competed against over fifteen area high schools at Canisius College in November.

Team Norway made up of Konstantinos Ntakoulas, Brandon Yurina, and Evan Hovey won their ECOSOC delegation.

Procrastination,

Continued from page 4

Yet, this is exactly why experts call procrastination an avoidance strategy. But what are all the types of procrastinators, and how can they be helped?

To answer that question, studies done by Baumeister, John Perry of Stanford University, and Dan Ariely of Duke University pose the following theory.

Perfectionists

Perfectionists take pride in their work, and when the final product is not worthy of their standards, most of them choose to ignore that the task ever existed. Most perfectionists will always wait for the right moment, the right opportunity, but it never arrives.

Solutions for Perfectionists: defining clear goals

Hours of time spent for these type of people can actually be easily helped. Because of the desire to be the best and their works recognized, perfectionists will engage in countless activities and projects aware that they cannot fulfill them. Most of them are trivial things that they have proven themselves at before, but as it is an instant success for them, they will want to repeatedly.

Ostriches

The category of ostriches is not an attempt at insult for this type of slacker, but a metaphor for their head digging in the sand. This is a tactic of avoiding obligations leave dreams never fulfilled. Ostriches prefer to stay in their pleasant daily lives dreaming of success and great things. In this way, their defense mechanism copes with stress, negativity, and failure. They are often full of grandiose ideas, goals and plans for the future, without working on achieving them. They have a great advantage over others, but only when they decide to make dreams come true.

Solutions for Ostriches: get rid of the most difficult obligations first

Although few people can boast of being a morning type, scientists claim that the brain is most productive in the morning. Break the habit of rolling over in bed for a long time and do your homework in the morning when you are brand new. Don't rely on excuses such as fatigue or lack of inspiration later on.

An additional trick is to start developing a morning routine. Without work habits it is impossible to expect someone to write a DBQ for history as soon as they open their eyes. So, start with simple tasks like preparing meals for the day, checking list of assignments that are due. Train the brain for productivity.

Saboteurs

The life motive of these people is quite simple: failure only comes if you try. Taught by previous mistakes, constant criticism of their work, or the fact that they think they are not good enough, saboteurs give themselves reasons why not to do something. If they study for the exam, they start from the opinion that they will definitely fail, so learning has no purpose anyway. While sometimes they are not to blame for the burden they carry, it is up to them to realize that they cannot move forward that way. Ultimately, they don't make a lot of mistakes in life, but that's why they don't achieve a lot of success, either.

Solutions for saboteurs: write down commitments for each day

The most complicated problems most often require the simplest solutions. The very task of writing obligations creates a psychological desire in you but also an obligation to yourself to do it. Pay special attention to tasks that you almost always avoid. Get to know your flaws and act accordingly. Although it sounds ridiculous at first, make yourself think of the positive things that will happen if you do your homework.

Irresponsible Slackers

In short, the masters of procrastination. Every excuse is a good excuse, every task is delayed, and every deadline can be moved. They deeply believe that they work better under pressure and that starting on time is pointless. They prefer to use their time doing everything but what needs to be done. Baumeister believes they do it unconsciously; those commitments are seen as something that takes their time for everything else. They are often individuals whose works have the potential to be the best. Despite this, the quality of their work is unsatisfactory due to the constant race against time.

Solutions for the Irresponsible Slackers: create a calendar with deadlines

A visual representation of deadlines in all forms is likely to force these individuals to their full potential. Physically seeing a deadline approaching is not the same as just being aware that it is at the door. There are many advantages. While you have the dates of obligations already waiting in front of you, you will be more aware that there is no time to postpone because one task is immediately followed by another. You will stop procrastinating immediately by becoming more aware that everything depends on each other by moving one simple deadline.

Timids

They do what they want at that moment, without regretting the unfinished business. Netflix series and TikToks the night before the deadline sounds like a dream to them. Learning on the school bus on the way to school is the best method because the information stays fresh.

Although they are aware of the obligations that are accumulating, they are quick to put them under the carpet. They then calm their conscience by doing unimportant little things that present themselves as something that was supposed to be done yesterday.

Solutions for Timids: divide the tasks into several parts

For these types, fear of obligations comes from the fact that they think too much about how many commitments they have, and too few do them. If you are aware that a particular task is difficult or makes you uncomfortable, break it down throughout the week. Also, if you are struggling with questions about how and where to start, don't be ashamed to ask.

While it seems like something like this takes more time and concentration, it's far from the truth. Dedicate an hour a day, and with a little effort, you will accomplish smaller steps of the bigger task, which will eventually lead to completion.

"Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today" rings true.

Understanding why people procrastinate is beneficial, since it can help you figure out why you yourself procrastinate, which in turn can help you figure out how to solve your procrastination problem. Recognize any setbacks early on and try not to fall back into your old ways.

Swim,

Continued from page 5

Spanitz.

Senior Sophia Nazarevych had a stunning PR in the 100 yard fly, qualifying for Sectionals and placing 5th overall.

Other swimmers like junior Ella Miller (a first year competitor for this team), sophomore Kerira Killelea, and junior Nevada Walker were able to put together an outstanding season and play a vital role in primarily the freestyle events.

The season was hard fought and will continue to get more difficult with the loss of seniors White and Nazarevych.

"It's hard, you know? I have put my heart into this sport and now to come to end of the line and understand that 'that's it'...it honestly is just difficult to grasp," says White, who had just finished her senior season.

"Those are two really good swimmers and competitors...the team won't be the same without them; however, we have a lot of young talent as well. We will succeed like we have every other year," stated Coach Michael O'Connor.

SGB's Holiday Hoopla!

Dec. 20~23

Mon: Red & Green

Tues: Santa Hats & Crazy Socks

Wed: Pajamas & Blankets

Thurs: Festive Sweaters

**Featuring
the Polar
Express!**



Reading,

Continued from page 3

the Sora app on your phone, you can always have a book with you without having to carry anything extra. Sora allows you to make notes and highlight sections while you are reading. Also, when reading an eBook, you can zoom the text, change your background lighting, search the text and more.”

To have access to the thousands of eBooks and audiobooks through the flexible, easy-to-use program, you simply have to sign into your Sora account. The steps can be found on the library webpage. In the drop-down menu, click “Iroquois Central School District” and enter the username and password that you use to log into your computer.

While this isn’t particularly new information, perhaps you’re looking to try a new form of entertainment given the general lack thereof, due to the pandemic. Following just a few steps will give you access to an online library with a huge variety of eBooks and audiobooks.

In fact, many people took up reading over quarantine as a way to pass the time. For example, Andie Jones, a senior and member of Iroquois Reads, said that Sora has helped her read more.

“I do prefer to read physical books over reading on my phone or laptop; however, it is often very difficult to do since physical books are often bulky and hard to bring places. I think Sora is a great tool that has helped me read a lot more. It is much more convenient to read a book on my phone than a physical book, when I have limited time or just don’t have a physical book on me,” Jones said.

Her overall impression of the app was that it was very convenient, easy to use and entertaining. She said, “Sora is a great form of entertainment, it is very accessible and easy to do when you have 5 minutes of free time. It also has a large collection of eBooks and audiobooks that are all very entertaining.”

Even if you don’t prefer online reading, there’s always other ways to use reading as entertainment, namely hard copies and audiobooks.

Xavier Canaple, sophomore and member of Iroquois Reads, is one who prefers hard copies of books. “I find reading to be an excellent form of entertainment. Books are not hard to come by, and I can read for hours a day.”

If you are someone who enjoys reading in your free time, maybe Iroquois Reads is the club for you. It is open to anyone who enjoys reading in their free time. The club meets virtually or in person, depending on your cohort, Thursday mornings. The meetings are spent discussing books other members have read or want to read.

In respect to Iroquois Reads, Canaple said, “Iroquois Reads is a club where readers come together to talk about books we’ve read. It’s nice to talk to other people who like to read, and some- are en- times you can discover a new book that your peers are enjoying.”

SOAR INTO SORA

- Open Sora, either online or in the app if you want to download it.
- Click “find my school,” then “my school isn’t listed.”

Students are encouraged to stop by the Library to see her regarding Sora, print materials or to join Iroquois Reads! If you’re interested, Iroquois Reads is always accepting new members. You can email Mrs. Freatman to sign up.

In the end, reading is an ideal pastime. It is said to keep your brain sharp and it is very entertaining. And, with the right book, it can be very entertaining.

So, if you’re already a reader, or you’re looking for something to do one snowy afternoon, give Sora a try. It’s free, and it’s better for your brain than mindless games and social media apps. All you have to do is borrow a book.

Entertainment,

Continued from page 3

fic due to the absence of movie theatres. YouTube has become the most popular source of entertainment in 2020, and now 2021. With nearly 2 billion users on the website, it is the most used video-based entertainment site in the world. With more than 1 million creators putting out videos regularly, YouTube offers the ability for the viewer to find and pursue new interests via the 300,000 videos that are uploaded each day.

Nick Vito, a former senior at Iroquois, spoke on what kept him entertained during quarantine. “When I was stuck at home, I would watch YouTube for several hours during the evening. I definitely watched more YouTube than any other video streaming site.”

Vito said he mostly watched gaming videos and football highlights when he was browsing the site.

Most young YouTube-watchers will find a handful of creators and subscribe to their channel for their personality and amusing videos. Tuning in for the new content coming out, pressing “like” on the video, and commenting on those videos are some ways YouTube-watchers support their favorite creators.

Older YouTube-watchers tend to use the site less frequently and more for useful “how to” type videos rather than spending their time looking for gaming content or skits. For them, YouTube is less of a source for entertainment and more of a resource for DIY tutorials.

The unique entertainment YouTube provides is not the only factor that can be attributed to its popularity. YouTube is free! That’s right; you can watch hours of YouTube every day and you don’t need to pay a cent for it. However, at \$12 per month, there is an optional subscription for “YouTube Premium” that allows the viewer to watch videos ad-free and download unlimited content for offline watching.

The accessibility of the site paired with the diversity of entertainment and helpful content is unmatched by any other online entertainment provider. This is why the site is so popular among groups of people at all ages.



ITAC Caroling Commercial

Iroquois students came out to film a TV ad to promote shopping locally—and maintaining a healthy lifestyle during the holiday season.



LEAD’s Midnight Bowling!

Friday, Jan. 7

9:30 p.m. to Midnight

Get a team of 4-5 friends and a teacher, pick a group costume, and come out to bowl!

Cost is \$15: for 3 games of bowling, shoes, pizza, and prizes!

It’s finally back—so don’t miss out on this great night!

Gas Prices,

Continued from page 2

The supply was slow to bounce back once the economy opened again. The loosening of Covid restrictions globally in the past year has led to a rapid recovery in global demand for crude oil. So, with people starting to go back out and the economy beginning to open up from the shutdown, there was not enough gasoline produced for everyone's needs. As a result, the prices skyrocketed.

With Hurricane Ida raging in the eastern part of the country, there has also been a lower production. Furthermore, the cost of products like sugar, rice, and lumber have increased, so there is no one to blame and people need to now make the best of it.

The increase of gas prices obviously has direct impacts on the global economy. It directly effects transportation, which directly impacts households, businesses, and transportation chains. In addition, according to Investopedia.com, due to high gas prices, people will spend less money on non-necessary items and shopping, since you need to car to get to shopping centers or stores. Industry sectors have responded to this series of changes in a different way. For example, the car industry's response is to produce smaller and more efficient cars.

It is no surprise that teenagers, especially, were effected by such high gas prices. After asking different senior and junior students how much they spend on gas a month, the answers were shocking. The students estimated their answer that ranged from just \$50 to a staggering \$400. Average answers were \$80, \$100, \$180 and \$200 a week. Furthermore, while some teenagers like to have a full tank when they fill up, many put smaller amounts of money like \$30 to simply make it through the next days.

Teenagers were asked if the gas prices reduce the amount of driving that they would like to do. Most of the teenagers responded that they have been driving only since 2020; therefore, most of them did not really experience the increase directly and the prices were already high when they started driving.

Nevertheless, most of the teens responded that they try to keep their use of their cars as limited as possible because of the costs. Other students noted that they spend a lot on gas due to the trips to school and to work, which is necessary for them. Since many have a part-time job with high wages, they do not mind spending money on gas and drive as much as they feel like.

It is very uncertain how the gas prices will behave in the future. It does not seem like they are going down in the next few months and may fluctuate. The gas will also be limited in the future because of the high requests, so planning ahead for gasoline consumption and costs is not a bad idea.

Caffeine,

Continued from page 2

Caffeine has more of an influence in this lack of sleep than most people would think. It gets dangerous quickly when teens are so easily influenced and cannot get the sleep they need.

According to *Healthline*, 72% of children at the high school age are not getting enough sleep nightly. This is mainly because of the latest forms of entertainment along with social influence. It is considered normal to stay up late watching the latest shows, scrolling through social media and talking to friends. With social media, people are seen up partying at night and they are happy as ever. Average people assume that they can live the same way as all of the influencers online. Teens are heavily influenced by others they see online for a need of being interesting. Caffeinated drinks are promoted on social media, with celebrities' smiling faces portraying the brand. Recognized internationally for car racing, NASCAR frequently endorses their sponsor Monster Energy in their advertisements.

Caffeine is a central nervous system stimulant and one of the most addictive substances due to how widely used it is. The vast majority of people will put this substance into their bodies without a second thought, even though it could be contributing to the main problems they are having. According to the CDC, the effects of caffeine often cause a rise in anxiety, obesity, and sleep deprivation. Lack of sleep, however, is the main thing people assume caffeine will help to combat. It's common for people to think a cup of coffee will keep one awake through the day, yet it may also be what keeps people so tired.

Over time, caffeine, like any other drug, will form a tolerance in the human brain. Making these drinks more of a necessity than a treat or a "pick me up" every once in a while is dangerous. As the body depends on caffeine, it will react with headaches, exhaustion, and irritability.

The way to prevent teens from regular caffeine use and addiction is to focus on other aspects of their lives. They should choose healthy drink alternatives and be more discerning of the advertisements for caffeinated beverages. Coffee is a treat! Enjoy it, but don't let it run your life. Herbal teas will give a gentle boost without the feeling of being charged up. Eating breakfast in the morning is a must. One of the main reasons teens are so exhausted is because there is no fuel in their bodies. Even a simple piece of toast or apple is better than nothing.

Shark Tank,

Continued from page 2

"I've always been interested in business and how different businesses run, and so it was pretty much a given to take the class."

The *Shark Tank* contest was intended to have students create their business pitch and plan out phases of their own business. Current's business is called Pool Manager where he created an app to manage the chemicals in a swimming pool. He plans to pursue this business in the future.

Current stated, "This competition showed me how to do my research and planning before starting a business. I have already begun to start this app. I've done the hard work, so now it's time to see if my idea would be as profitable as I predicted."

Cyara Mattia, along with Ellie Kistner, were the first place winners of the *Shark Tank* Competition. These former seniors' business idea was to establish a mobile nail salon.

The entrepreneurs on the judging panel provided advice and the overall scores of each student's business.

"They suggested to use the mobile nail salon as a nonprofit for things that I never wouldn't thought of by myself," expressed Mattia.

She took Entrepreneurship because she was intrigued on the topic and interested on how a business functions. Preparing for the competition was her focus through most of her course work.

Mattia stated, "The whole project itself was very interesting. It was cool to see and experience how much work actually goes into every detail of the company."

The day of the competition, her partner was unable to attend, so Mattia had to scramble. The outcome turned out better than she could have expected!

"I was kind of surprised because at the last minute I had to change up my game plan, memorize all of my partner's portions, and then present it to the judges myself," she noted.

Competitors all lined up on stage for the winners to be announced.

"I was really shocked, but so happy that all my hard work paid off!" Mattia said.

The competition was tough, and Mattia said that the other presentations were really well done, but perhaps the ideas were maybe not quite as original as theirs.

Current stated, "The experience was worth more than the prize money and will pay off even more in the long run."

The Iroquois Shark Tank Competition brought students together and their bright ideas to light. It is one of the exciting events that continues to encourage students to explore new courses and career paths.

Buffalo Sports,

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games. Ray works for MSG Buffalo and helps with television broadcasts. The BSC group is currently planning to conduct an interview with Ray.

Former Bills punter Colton Schmidt also frequently messages the group about the Buffalo Bills. Schmidt played a total of five seasons and believes that he is very familiar with the people of the city.

Schmidt expressed, "Buffalo will always be my home," and that "Bills fans are the most passionate fans in the world."

He described how pages like BSC help engage and group Bills fans together during hard times in the local community.

Ellis is the leader of BSC and creates most of the graphics used on the Instagram. Most pictures uploaded to the Instagram account use Ellis's templates and visual graphics. He has been active in the Buffalo sports community for over five years.

When asked what inspired him to make the brand, Ellis responded, "I always wanted to make a news account and decided with a group of friends to try it out."

Ellis has always had a passion for sports and wanted to let others hear his thoughts and views on the local sports teams. Students from schools including West Seneca and St. Mary's have joined the brand and help come up with ideas and create videos.

Ellis affirmed, "This is just the beginning for us, and we plan to have many other athletes join our podcasts in the future."

Jake Bufflyn, 18, works for BSC as a graphics designer. He started working for the sports page as a volunteer because he had high interest in what the news source was creating.

"BSC was one of the most informational pages on Instagram, and still is. I enjoy working with them and they always treat each other with respect," Bufflyn claimed.

BSC often has various giveaways on their Instagram and the page is very interactive with their followers. They can convey thoughts on posts and share their score predictions for the chance of a shout-out or a cash prize.

All in all, the Buffalo sports community is very passionate about their local teams and they enjoy watching them play.

You can find Buffalo Sport Center's work on Instagram @buffalo_sportscenter and on YouTube under the channel name Buffalo SportsCenter.

Free Lunch,

Continued from page 4

Out of 26 Iroquois students interviewed, 15 replied that they buy their lunch, and 11 bring from home. Lisa Valentin, the Food Services Director, stated more than 1,500 lunches get sold daily district-wide, and nearly 320 in the high school.

According to Kendall Heller, senior, "Over the past year and a half, I got food from the cafeteria because it is free. I enjoy getting the salads and the cafeteria has more choices than they did in the past few years."

Most students are taking up the opportunity to have themselves a free breakfast and/or lunch every day.

Konstantinos Ntakoulas, senior, also noted that he gets breakfast and lunch each day from the cafeteria because it is free. He also mentioned that the cafeteria has a wide variety of food, including healthy options. Additionally, he does not have much time in the morning, so he enjoys stopping for breakfast before school starts. His only regret is that he wished there were bigger portions.

Another concern among students is why they do not get to choose their own sides with their lunches. The NYS policy is everyone must get a fruit and vegetable with their lunch. Many have indicated that this mandate creates more food going to waste. Since the pandemic started, lunches are now pre-packaged by the cafeteria staff to avoid physical contact between students, hoping to limit the spread of the virus. Therefore, this measure prevents students from choosing their sides with their lunches, besides their milk of choice.

One of the biggest questions from the Senior Class of 2022, who were the ones who had a normal first year and a half of high school, is what happened to Diane's "Famous" Chuckwagon food cart? The food cart had quick and easy food access for many students and teachers since it was located at the front hallway of the school.

When asked about the topic, Keller replied with, "We used to be in the front. Once they moved me to the middle hallway by the cafeteria, the business went down. Not a lot of kids were coming to get it because they didn't know I was there. The middle hall was really crowded, and it wasn't worth it for me to be out there. So, they pulled me out and that was it with the cart."

Although many of students loved the food cart, the cafeteria staff also works hard to satisfy each and every student daily, serving different hot food selections to provide a wide variety of choices. They also have plenty of options in the cold food section from wraps to salads. The most popular sold item in the cafeteria by far is pizza, a favorite among the students. However, students' least favorite is the sliced turkey and gravy.

Overall, there has been many of changes over the course of the past year for the students and staff. However, one of the most changed things would certainly be the school lunches. The future of school lunches is unknown as the state has the responsibility of all school lunch decisions.

Fast Fashion,

Continued from page 5

There are increasing concerns for how even the articles that end up in waterways and natural environment will survive for years to come. It is truly possible that there will still be signs of *Shien* in a hundred years being dug up.

Twin Environment Services, a renowned blog published by scientists and other professionals, says, "Synthetic fibers take a lot longer to decompose since they are predominantly made from plastics. Plastics such as Lycra and polyester will take 500+ years to decompose."

These articles of clothing and other inexpensive pieces now get to outlive us as well as over five generations more beyond us.

An Iroquois Student who is a consumer of *Shien* stated, "It is cheap, comes in fast, and it gets the job done."

When asked about how she feels about the environment and the child labor, she stated, "I honestly believe that me supporting or not will not cause a significant difference in what is happening there. It is horrible what is occurring, but I cannot influence it."

Not only does the original purchasing of these products have major negative effects on the planet, but many argue that the backbone of fashion is built largely on the labor of the less fortunate who do not have a voice. Corrupt labor practices have been questioned for years in the fashion industry.

Labor intensive work for menial wages has always been a suspect practice in textiles. Furthermore, the inhumane working conditions of the early 20th century led to major revisions of the laws and standards of wages.

The History Channel discussed, "The March 25, 1911, Triangle Shirtwaist Fire was one of the deadliest workplace catastrophes in U.S. history, claiming the lives of 146 workers, most of them women immigrants in their teens and twenties."

The tragedy sparked major changes in how the fashion industry was allowed to progress in the United States with new safety codes and inspections of working conditions.

However, this is not the case for the rest of the world. L&E Global, an organization working towards exposing the working conditions worldwide said, "Under the standard working hours system, employees work for ten hours per day and 40 to 50 hours per week and usually more."

As Americans are enjoying the freedoms of worker equity laws, competitive wages, safety regulations, and unemployment compensations, while many workers globally suffer.

We must remember how others are struggling in foreign countries with living conditions that are dramatically different from ours, assuming that we are not creating an impact.

As global citizens, maybe our blame does extend beyond the click at the "Checkout" button on our computer screens.

Homecoming

Continued from page 1

strong participation and for collecting the most spirit points throughout the week's activities.

Junior Arija Hartel was disappointed that juniors lost the Spirit Award and said, "It was so disappointing. I thought we had it till the last minute; we deserved it."

Friday night featured the Varsity Football Homecoming Game against Pioneer High School. The Chiefs won in a tough battle with a score 19-14. The whole field was filled with Iroquois fans cheering for their team, creating a dynamic and powerful atmosphere.

For many students, the Homecoming Dance "Saddle-up Iroquois" was the highlight of Homecoming and the best possible ending for this unforgettable week. The dance took place for the first time outdoors on the tennis courts, changing the classic scenery that everyone was familiar with.

Senior Maggie Darmstedter commented, "I loved being with my friends at the dance! We were getting prepared for it for weeks and it totally overcame our expectations. The music from the dance still beats in my ears."

Senior Veljko Rakic, exchange student from Serbia, noted, "The dance was the highlight of my week and one of the best memories I made so far in my exchange year here in the U.S. The dance definitely pumped up the school spirit and made me feel part of the Iroquois family."

All in all, Homecoming left its mark in the history of Iroquois. It was a week that students are going to remember.



LEAD Halloween Coloring Contest

Grade 5 students submitted festive and spooky entries for the coloring contest. Two winners were selected from each classroom!

Striving to be
the Best

Tomahawk Staff

- Paige Aichinger
- Jack Baiocco
- Madelyn Bruno
- Mason Falkiewicz
- Riley Kistner
- Maggie Darmstedter
- Cal McTigue
- Isabella Michael
- Konstantinos Ntakoulas
- Lena Paszek
- Veljko Rakic
- Victoria Rieman
- Luca Schmidt
- Bri Turpin
- Emma Wilson
- Matthew Sitarek
- Olivia Nuwer
- Jacob Cantie
- Mikayla Durkin
- Zechariah Franklin
- Aidan Gauthier
- Hayden Griebel
- Emily Gordon
- Andie Jones
- Grace Kwiatkowski
- Laura Kuehner
- Madeline Maclean
- Avery Mengay
- Owen Szeglowksi
- Isabella Thomas
- Mrs. Cantie, Advisor

Museums,

Continued from page 4

for you! With a "pay what you wish" policy, the cost is minimal to visit 1 Museum Ct.

Some of the temporary exhibits are a Western New York conservation of cultural heritage room, which is open until the end of this year. This exhibit includes paintings, furniture, and other one-of-a-kind rarely displayed objects.

Another temporary exhibit is *Icons: The Makers and Moments of Buffalo Sports*. This shares the unique history of Buffalo sports teams and their connection between with the area fans. Here you may find items on display such as game jerseys and interactive displays.

Now, of course, they have some permanent exhibits as well. Some of these include the Native American Gallery, the Train Gallery, and much more.

Another attraction is the fact that they have a research library open to everyone. You can visit in person or virtually! They have books, diaries, letters, pamphlets and much more. So, local residents will find something interesting to connect with at the Buffalo History Museum.

If you're interested in science, then the **Buffalo Museum of Science** is the place for you! There is plenty of time to go and tons of exhibits for everyone in the family!

In the **Buffalo Museum of Science** there are many interactive exhibits, some of which include their In Motion room and the Senserie room that show children how the Erie Canal works. They also have numerous rooms related to space and the atmosphere of our earth.

If those aren't your speed, perhaps the room full of artifacts would interest you, or maybe you want to go visit Seymour the Mastodon and Stanley the Albertosaurus. In fact, many of the Mastodon bones have been found right in New York State, dating back to the Ice Age.

Of course, there are many other exhibits for you to visit in your time there; however, those are the big attractions. In addition to all their permanent features, they have a temporary exhibit room that changes every few months, which is always a hit!

The temporary exhibit right now is called *Lost Beauty II: The Art of Museum Stories*, this exhibit is open until December 31. The room holds 15 special items from the museum's vast collections and some of Alberto Rey's paintings. This exhibit questions the depth of which you perceive items and historical artifacts. It shows that one piece may mean something different to everyone.

The museum is open Wednesdays through Sundays from 10 p.m. until 4 p.m. The cost is fairly reasonable to go and visit this museum, adults are \$16, kids from 2-17 are \$13 and if you are a student, senior, or military personnel and can show proof it is also \$13 for admission.

However, if you want to pay a yearly membership fee, all visits are free, and you do not have to make reservations! The cost of the membership varies depending on what package you want. There is an individual package (\$60) or a dual package (\$70).

So, the next time you're looking for something to do, look in your own backyard! There is so much to do here in WNY, so come out and learn more about our local heritage.