

# The Tomahawk

Student Newspaper

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“Striving to Be  
the Best”

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## Finally: TURF

By Isabella Thomas, *senior*

Imagine that you are a senior athlete excited for your final high school season. You play well at practice and on your home field. Then, the whole team packs up for an away game on turf. You walk into the other school’s huge sports facility and look at their pristine turf fields and already, you’re worried.

You try to keep up, but the new surface is just too different. It’s a huge adjustment and even though you play well, you never seem to get used to it. You’re a little disappointed, but what can you do? You don’t have turf to practice on, so you struggle through.

For years, this has been the plight of Iroquois athletes. Iroquois has great athletic programs, so why don’t we have turf?

Thankfully, future athletes won’t have to worry about this scenario. Iroquois will be improving our athletic accommodations thanks to the passing of the new improvement project.

Construction of an updated athletic facility is to begin as soon as 2022. The plan calls

for a new track and a turf field, as well as a new scoreboard, bleachers, and lights. This new sports complex will be built on Girdle Rd., right across the street from the school.

The turf field will be multi-purposed so that a variety of sports can use it. Athletes and coaches alike know that there are many benefits to having a turf field. Not only will it improve game play, but its versatility has many practical benefits as well.

Turf is easier to maintain than grass. After all, a turf field doesn’t have to be cut, rolled, or aerated as grass fields do. It won’t require fertilizers and watering to keep it in shape. It also doesn’t require cutting or other constant maintenance. Also, this lower maintenance, more consistent surface will last the school anywhere from 8 to 10 years before it needs to be replaced.

The benefits don’t stop with improved maintenance. According to the Sport by APT website, turf fields have all-weather utility that grass fields don’t. Turf won’t turn into a

mud puddle should it rain, and it won’t turn into a dirt patch in the summer heat.

Mrs. Vetter, Athletic Director, elaborates on this point. “One of the biggest benefits of having a turf field is that it dramatically decreases the need for cancellations due to weather. Turf can be used in any weather unless it’s covered in snow.”

The improvement project outline also points out the versatility of turf fields. It alludes to the fact that one turf field can be the playing field for multiple sports. This is accomplished by painting lines on the field and using a different color for each sport, which ensures that multiple field sports can use the turf during the same season.

Of course, there are benefits to actual game play itself as well. According to Maddison Miranda, senior field hockey goalie, playing on turf has significant benefits over grass.

See **Turf Field**, *page 9*

## Teachers Dealing With Hybrid & Remote Learning

By Emily Gordon, *senior*

Since March of 2020, there have been a lot of change because of COVID-19, but one huge impact has been on schooling. Many people are worried about the students trying to learn online and not being able to comprehend the content, but what about the teachers? They are going through a change from teaching students in school to teaching a computer screen, and this is stressful for them, too.

In *Time’s Person of the Year*, a couple of teachers were asked about how they handled the beginning of the school year and how they are doing currently. Many of them answered that they have struggles and are having a hard

time. COVID-19 has given teachers a whole new set of challenges, which has really posed a struggle for them throughout the school year.

Kara Stoltenberg, a teacher in Oklahoma says, “I am teaching an empty classroom, and it’s kind of sad,” stated in a *Time’s* interview.

“I can’t feel the personal connection of being able to give my kiddos a high five when they do good or give them a hug when I see someone crying,” said Mrs. Gordon, a fourth grade teacher at Clarence Center.

Most teachers love seeing their students in

See **Hybrid Learning**, *page 6*

# Teen Influencers

By Madelyn Maclean

Technology and social media are something our generation is used to, and it has become an inherent part of everyday life. Between Instagram, Tik Tok, and even Snapchat, COVID-19 has caused a rapid increase in screen time over a short period. As a result, social media influencers expand and reach to people in all new ways. Society has seen many younger influencers grow and become more popular over social medial platforms, even to where they become trending names.

Influencers use social media to spread positivity, give kids hope, and inspire people to reach for their dreams. These are just a few examples of the roles that these influencers play for modern online society.

As social media comes out with more platforms, it gives influencers new ways to reach young minds. Many say that seeing young adults grow to influence others is inspirational and encouraging. Many believe that our world needs a little

bit of hope and more smiles during this world crisis, and that can be provided by social media.

Channing Traylor, a 19 year-old local social media influencer here in WNY, spoke about how he sees his role for young people in society. Hearing how these influencers view themselves can be eye-opening to many.

Traylor states, “When I first think of Tik Tok, I think about how you can make any idea come to life. I want to show people of all ages that it is okay to be yourself and they don’t need to pretend to be someone they aren’t.”

Traylor uses an alter-ego named Ozzie. Ozzie is a character who shows all of his “flaws,” things he has been self-conscious about and uncomfortable with since he was younger. With using Tik Tok, Ozzie Traylor believes that he can be comfortable with himself,

See Social Media, page 7

# Seniors Shifting College Choices

By Aidan Gauthier, senior

High school seniors are always in difficult situations at the start of their senior year. Whether it be through struggles of applying to colleges or the pressure of adult life, these students’ schedules are booked. Currently, coronavirus has setback normal events or delayed them completely.

In 2020, seniors are contemplating straying from the traditional transition to college education by switching to a community college path or taking a gap year.

Seniors this year are looking more into the financial aspect of college. Tuition is always a factor into a student’s decision, but for upcoming semesters, students aren’t willing to pay an expensive tuition for classes they may be taking from their bedroom. In turn, many are turning to local community colleges.

Community colleges offer a great start to an educational path just as much as any other school. Spending less on higher education and localizing a college experience for the first couple years of an intended major may be beneficial to a students’ financial standings for years to come.

A senior at Iroquois, Joey Doraski, is experiencing these obstacles right now.

“I have recently been looking into possibly taking a two-year community college path. Is it really worth spending tens of thousands of dollars on dorming at one of my top schools for the little experience I would be having?” he questioned.

Doraski isn’t the only one. Students amid the pandemic are completing their basic courses at community colleges. Financially, CNBC shows that a typical cost for community college would be \$3,730, compared to a four-year public school tuition of \$10,440.

Locally, SUNY Erie Community College has an in-state tuition of \$5,575, compared to University at Buffalo that has an in-state tuition of \$10,524.

The college decision process is difficult for many even in a normal year, but in 2020, different aspects of college life are being considered among applicants.

Doraski states, “In an unprecedented year like this, I feel that this process has become even more difficult. New questions come into consideration with the current standings of the pandemic. What is campus life like now with their guidelines? How is the dorming situation safety wise?”

Doraski also mentioned his unrest with the cancellation of New York State’s Excelsior Program for the Class of 2021.

This program aids certain eligible students to attend SUNY colleg-

See College Decision, page 5

# Is Teen Depression “Trending”?

By Anna Hinchcliff, senior

It is no surprise that teen mental health has been making a steep decline the past two decades. The CDC reports that 3.2% of kids 3 to 17 years-old are diagnosed with depression, and 7.1% of kids in the same age group are diagnosed with anxiety. Aside from the obvious events of the past year’s global pandemic, is social media and “FOMO culture” to blame for the rising rates of mental health crisis in teens?

The stigma around mental health problems like anxiety and depression has been slowly disappearing with more movies and shows portraying these issues. Hashtags and posts on social media circle around bringing awareness; however, research may suggest that this open dialogue has some negative, unwanted side effects.

Teenagers today are constantly scrolling though Instagram and Twitter, watching TikToks, YouTube, and Netflix for hours a day. They are faced with people’s seemingly perfect lives or the glorified stories of those facing depression and anxiety. When teens see these people posting about their struggles, they can feel less alone and even comforted, which is an amazing way social media has connected people.

However, these platforms can also expose developing minds to bullying, peer pressure, rumors, and unrealistic views of people’s lives. A 2019 study on 12 to 15-year-olds from the Mayo Clinic found that the kids who used social media for 3 or more hours a day may be at a heightened risk for mental health problems. These platforms have proven to be very harmful to teens’ mental health in more ways than one.

Jonathan Shady, a senior at Iroquois, said

See Teen Depression, page 8

# Exercise Needed During Pandemic

By Zechariah Franklin, senior

There is nothing that will dull your brain quicker than locking your eyes onto a screen for 6-8 hours each day. Sitting all day is the worst way to be productive.

Teens have been told for years now that staring at a screen for too long will “melt” their brains, and now suddenly they have no choice due to the second wave of online schooling. Fortunately, there is a remedy that is proven to work for combatting the feelings of discouragement and laziness that screens cause: exercise.

Exercise is the best thing that can be done to improve your mood and productivity. Exercise has a positive effect on us from our physical appearance down to the molecular level. In a study reported by *The Conversation*, exercise induced the activity of monocytes in a participant. Monocytes are an important immune system cell that circulates the blood stream. The presence of these cells reduces inflammation in the body. The more active these cells are, the better our body can fight off foreign invaders such as viruses.

Additionally, during exercise the lungs work harder to meet the muscles’ demand for oxy-

See Getting Exercise, page 7

# Seniors Finally Get Some Cheer

By Mikayla Durkin, *senior*

Outside of Iroquois High School, faculty and staff gathered to spread holiday cheer to honor the class of 2021. The sights of colorful Christmas lights and the blasting of Christmas tunes created a Senior Stocking Day extravaganza.

The coronavirus has put a limit on the amount of activities the school can host. Senior class advisors Mrs. Slowik and Ms. Chace planned this event for the students. This idea was thought of by senior, Jacob Cantie. The event allowed the students to see each other and their teachers while staying safe. All students were mandated to stay in their cars and wear a mask as they followed each other in a line.

Slowik assured her favorite part was, "seeing the photos and knowing that the seniors who were there had a good time!"

As the cars drove down in a

parade-like fashion, they saw several of the faculty. Principal Dr. Ramirez walked up to each of the cars and thanked the students for coming. Mr. Dombrowski made a memorable impact in providing a sound booth that graced everyone with Christmas songs and flashing lights. Festive lights were provided by Mr. Beetow from his house. Additionally, maintenance and Mr. Hammett did an incredible job decorating with blow ups from the Student Government. As the students drove past, they saw gym teacher Mrs. Kiblin wearing a Santa Claus suit.

Senior, Kathleen Bryant shared, "Kiblin dressed up as Santa made me smile a lot!"

The seniors had the opportunity to decorate their cars as well.

See **Senior Stockings**, *page 8*

# Will Theaters Survive Covid?

By Andie Jones, *senior*

Going to the movie theaters used to be a fun and a fairly cheap activity that was perfect for hanging out with friends or spending time with family. However, with COVID-19 shutting down businesses, movie theaters are struggling.

According to the Mxdwm website, the movie industry is one of the industries that were the most negatively affected by the pandemic.

Some movie theaters were able to open back up, just with limited capacity. However, this can cost the movies theaters more money than what they are making, especially for smaller theaters. When they are completely shut down, they are receiving aid and funding from the government, which they would not receive otherwise.

According to AMC's third quarter earnings, AMC theaters have made a revenue of \$119.5 million, as of early September, when in September 2019 AMC earned \$1.3 billion. They lost \$905.8 million, which is a 90.9% drop between this year and the year prior.

Not only were the theaters affected, but the industry itself was, too. Films such as *Onward* that were just released in theaters when the quarantine started were quickly moved to streaming platforms. However, there were questions on what to do with films that were meant to be released during quarantine.

According to Wcbru radio, some movie studios were looking for ways to experiment with releasing movies to the public, while still making money and earning a profit. One way some studios choose was to release movies as digital rentals only.

The studios are taking the films that were meant to be viewed in theaters and calling these films "premium videos on demand." Premium videos are now being rented for around \$20, which would have cost around \$3-\$6 before the quarantine. This major increase in price is a way for the studios to make a profit off the movies now that they are not showing in theaters.

See **Movie Theaters**, *page 8*

# Spring Toward Renewal

By Mikayla Durkin, *senior*

The Coronavirus may be putting a damper on this school year, but there is still a possibility of exciting events being held at Iroquois High School. Many clubs such as LEAD and Student Government still have hope to carry on old traditions and possibly create new ones!

LEAD is a club that provides students with leadership opportunities and to do programming events for the students and community. LEAD has been around for twenty-two years and is open to all high school students who want to get involved on campus. LEAD plans to get rolling again in February and throughout the remainder of the school year. The officers and Mrs. Cantie, advisor, have thought of creative ways to keep the students involved during these troubling times.

"Yes, we are hoping to continue our Coffee House, Midnight Bowling, and Dance Party for the special needs kids; however, we need to re-vamp the process due to limitations in the spring, if needed," Cantie said.

The Coffee House is a tradition that permits all high school students to participate. Typically, students will audition for performances with an act of their choice. The students and faculty will watch the show while enjoying beverages and treats. LEAD members are discussing and thinking creatively to allow this show to be taken place while keeping the students and faculty safe.

This past year, many of the students' field trips were postponed. The school's Concert Choir had arrangements made to travel and perform in New York City. This trip was an event many of the students were looking forward to.

Margot Treadwell was part of the Iroquois graduating class of 2020. Treadwell was the treasurer for the choir, which is a vital position,

See **Spring Renewal**, *page 7*

# The Coming AP Madness

By Hayden Griebel, *senior*

For many students taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes, the months of March, April, and especially May are stressful times. The last few weeks leading up to the exams are crunch time before students are bused to a college building or conference hall to take the three-hour exam.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the AP exams for 2020 were moved online because students were not allowed to take them in person. Therefore, AP students were required to stay at home and take their exams. Some students had just one exam to worry about, while others had three or even more.

More than 4 million students take AP exams every year. This became a problem in 2020 and more issues arose. The pandemic led to students having to provide their own laptops to take the exam online. Students also had to make sure that they had access to the internet at the time of their exam.

According to Spectrum Local News, many students around the world had trouble submitting their exams on the site. Either their internet was glitchy; they could not locate the file for the exam; or the submit button would not work. This caused

See **AP Exams**, *page 6*



# Girls' Tennis Finishes Strong

Laura Kuehner, *senior*

Girls' Varsity Tennis rounded off their season with 6 wins and 2 losses, finishing second in their division. Freshman Amelia Greenawalt placed seventh at ECICs and was named Division All-star while the first doubles team with Brooke Urmson, senior, and Alexa Neff, junior, receiving Division All-Star Honors.

Like many of the fall sports this past season, the tennis season was condensed and guidelines were set up regarding the pandemic. Teams were very careful to avoid sharing equipment with each other. For each match, teams and players were given their own cannister of balls and a rule was set in place allowing only the server to touch the ball. All other players were only permitted to touch the ball with their rackets.

As far as the matches went, many were double headers and only the required players were allowed attend so that the courts did not get too crowded. Like all Erie County fall sports this year, only two spectators per player were allowed to attend the matches in order to prevent creating a risky environment where the virus could spread.

In addition to the returning players, the pandemic forced many athletes to expand their horizons and try out an alternate sport.

Senior Hayden Griebel had been looking forward to her last year on the volleyball team when COVID shut down that opportunity, so she and a few other team members decided to give tennis a shot.

"I wanted to try something new," Griebel said. "I think the season went really well. We had a pretty well-rounded team and definitely a lot of beginners. I learned a lot throughout the season and developed new skills, and the team was really supportive."

The girls on the team, despite their different experience levels, Covid restrictions, and a shortened season, found ways to grow closer together as a team.

The team's coach, Mrs. Bernal, commented on the season, "I am pleasantly surprised with how the team bonded this year. Tennis practice was almost always the most normal part of my day."

Amelia Greenawalt, a freshman new to the district said, "I was nervous but excited to join the Iroquois Tennis Team. The girls all welcomed me as both a freshman and a new student to the district."

Greenawalt started playing tennis at 2 years-old and trains year-round at the Village Glen Tennis Center. She has played Varsity Tennis since 7<sup>th</sup> grade, first for Lancaster and now for Iroquois. She began the season undefeated until the teams match with East Aurora.

"I was dealing with a lingering shoulder injury and the competition was too tough," says Greenawalt.

With her injury, Greenawalt was unable to compete in the second half of the season; however, with help from the district's trainer, Coach Bernal, and some outside medical help, she was able to compete at ECICs and finished 7<sup>th</sup>, qualifying her for sectionals and earning her a Divisional All-Star.

Greenawalt may not have had the season she had hoped for with the pandemic and an injury to set her back, but she came back from it and made the best of her situation. She looks forward to what future seasons could bring, saying, "I look forward to building more team friendships next year and getting to know more people."

There are 5 seniors on the team this year: Emily Gordon, Hayden Griebel, Gabby Stawicki, Megan Teller (captain) and Brook Urmson (captain). Each of these girls, whether new to the sport or experienced, are grateful for the chance to play this year.

Come next fall, these girls' spots will be waiting to be filled by others.

"Next year's roster is wide open, so I am always looking for potential players to come out for the team," Bernal said in regard to the team's future.

COVID may have put a damper on many events planned for 2020, but it did not stop the tennis team from finishing off a strong and accomplished season of building friendships, as well as new and exciting skills.

## Senior Memories: Homecoming Trophy 2019



# SPORTS

## Field Hockey Finds Their Fire

Laura Kuehner, *senior*

The Iroquois Girls' Varsity Field Hockey team finished their season off strong with an overall record of 7 wins, 7 losses, and 1 tie as well as an overall Divisional record of four 4-0, winning them the Division III Championship.

The team began their season with far less pre-season preparation than they are accustomed to: the pandemic cancelling the team's winter and summer leagues, as well as shortening the regular season by three weeks. This created somewhat of a setback for the team as many of the juniors and underclassmen had little to no experience on a varsity team.

In fact, when reviewing the season, Coach Tonoline stated, "I only regret the shortened time we had together starting back in the summer. I do believe it would have made a huge difference if we had started in August and had a chance to play some scrimmages before the season began."

The team's lack of off-season preparation led to a bit of a rocky start, but the girls were determined.

The beginning of the season brought some disheartening losses as the team struggled to work as unit and build their confidence, but they did not let this weaken their resolve. Instead, it challenged them to work harder in order to become the best Iroquois field hockey team they could be.

Towards the later end of the season, the girls' hard work began to pay off in the third quarter of their game against Eden. The score was 0-0 when the Lady Chiefs, through an execution teamwork, scored a goal. And then another. And then another.

"I am super grateful that we got the chance to even have a season...."

Anna Hinchcliff,  
Senior

See Field Hockey, page 6

# Students Prep for SAT & ACT

Olivia Nuwer, *junior*

Preparing for college can be overwhelming and scary for most high school students seeking a future education. One big step towards choosing your college is taking the SAT and or ACT.

Before Covid-19 hit, these were the two biggest tests a student could take to help them determine their future. Now thanks to Covid-19, most colleges in the United States have pardoned these tests for their future students. As of right now, colleges have become test optional, meaning they are not requiring future students to take the SAT and ACT. This is only for high school seniors graduating in the spring of 2021, as of now.

Preparing for these tests can be dreadful for most students and they can cause anxiety and unnecessary stress to young students.

Most students ask, what is the purpose of the SAT or ACT? Well, in all honesty, they are long, boring assessments that you can use to prove your intelligence to the administration of your college of choice. One plus of these assessments is that they can help students receive scholarships, if they do exceptionally well on the exam.

Another major question most students have is; what is the difference between the SAT and ACT and is one better than the other? The SAT has two math sections, one that allows you to use a calculator and one that does not allow you to use a calculator. It also has a writing and language section, as well as a reading section, with an optional essay portion. This exam lasts between three and four hours depending on whether or not the student is writing the essay. It is then scored based on a scale between 400 and 1,600.

Then, the ACT has one math section, without the use of the calculator, an English section, a reading portion and a science section, as well as an optional essay section. It has the same time frame as the SAT, but the scoring is based on a scale of 1 to 36. And no, one test is not better than the other, but research shows the SAT is more commonly taken than the ACT. This is because of the science section on the ACT. Students should choose to take one test over the other based on their strengths.

At Iroquois Central High School, there are plenty of resources to help students prepare for both of these tests and help them to perform to the best of their ability. Iroquois is offering a nine-hour online course prep for the ACT. It is four days of two hours and fifteen-minute sessions for \$125.

They are also offering a four-hour online boot camp in preparation for the SAT. This session is two days for two hours at a time for \$65.

Outside of Iroquois, there are plenty of other options to prepare for these major tests. Students are able to purchase study books from a local bookstore or online. There is also a paperless option to studying, such as using websites. *College Board* is a website that is very helpful when it comes to preparing for the SAT and ACT.

Iroquois Central High School is a testing center for the SAT, with multiple date options throughout the springtime. They do not, however, offer the ACT test on campus. Students must go to a national testing center for the ACT, which there are many in Western, New York.

The PSAT is another step that many students take advantage of during their sophomore or junior year. Iroquois offers the PSAT in the fall time for students who are looking to get a gage of how much studying and preparing they need to do before the actual SAT. Most students do take advantage of this opportunity to help themselves succeed for the future.

Seniors at Iroquois who have already taken the SAT and ACT have noticed that the more they studied and the more effort they put into their studying, the better they did on the exam. Many students also took advantage of the given study help that Iroquois offers. Students said they found it stressful during the exam because of the time aspect and "knowing there was always another section once the time was up". Overall, they explained that the test was not too hard because they studied enough to get a good feel of the material that was on the test.

Overall, there is no reason to stress or worry about the SAT and ACT. There are many ways for students to prepare themselves to do great and once test day comes, they will be ready.



## Senior Memories:

Grade 9 Homecoming 2017

# College Decision,

*Continued from page 2*

es - tuition free. Students are eligible mainly if their household has a combined gross income of \$125,000 or less. "Scholarship awards may have to be reduced and/or prioritized for current recipients."

New York State's education website states, "The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically reduced state revenues and the processing of new applications... which has been delayed since April."

"There are endless amounts of questions and concerns that have been added onto this complex process," Doraski added.

With the impact of the coronavirus, a gap year feels like the best way to go forward for many students. A statistic from *The Hechinger Report* explains that on an average year, 3% of students nationwide consider taking a gap year, but studies this year show that 16% of students nationwide are considering taking a gap year for the 2020-2021 college semesters. This 13% jump shows that students are heavily thinking about taking a year off due to the current standings of college life.

Gap years aren't strictly just a year off from school and career work. Students who take gap years are encouraged to participate in programs that aid students in traveling and volunteering to help facilitate their near future decision. Due to the frequent closures of businesses and organizations, many of these gap year programs won't be operating like they were in previous years. Gap Year Online, a program held by *New York Times* journalists, lets students study directly with them and can "help you plan for your future."

Senior Liam Greier explains, "I have thought about taking a gap year, but I don't think that it would be specifically beneficial to me. If I did have to start my first year of college online, then I don't think it would make too big of a difference because the first couple of years are usually just the general required courses that aren't major specific."

Now more than ever, seniors should be precise with their college plans and should look at every possible option. Students can reach out to schools and universities if they have any concerns, and figure things out firsthand.

As the senior class of 2021 begins to wrap up their college decision process, time is the only thing that will determine the outcome of these upcoming college semesters.

Door  
Decorating  
Second  
Place:  
Homeroom  
192  
Ms.  
Wagner





# Hybrid Learning,

*Continued from page 1*

person as a little community because everyone is more interactive than they are online.

“One of my favorite parts of teaching is interacting with my students,” Mrs. McCoy stated in an interview with Iroquois teachers. “I also like to walk around my room while I teach and interact with the students.”

Online teaching takes away this more personal part of the teacher student-interaction. Teachers must find other ways to connect with their students, but it is hard because there is no in person contact at all.

Many teachers are getting better at remote teaching now because of the practice from the first wave of COVID that caused remote schooling in March and from the district’s administrators that have been helping and supporting the teachers throughout this episode.

On this topic, Mrs. Cuer, a math teacher at Iroquois said, “In the spring, it was very difficult for me and I felt isolated. This fall, because we can still go into the building and I have put tools together, I am not isolated, so the transition is not as bad.”

Still, teachers want to be able to provide an effective education to their students so they can learn how they are meant to.

Mr. Rainville, a science teacher at Iroquois also stated, “The only thing that can be a challenge is to find or design worthwhile assignments/labs for my students to complete.”

To help teachers stay socialized and less isolated, administrators have tried to put activities together for the teachers. Ms. Langheier, Assistant Principal at Iroquois, talked about how Iroquois tries to keep the teachers active as well as letting them know that they are always there for the teachers to talk to.

She said, “We hold a meeting every Wednesday at 11:15. This is an open time when teachers can come in and talk to me and the other administrators about how they are doing and about anything they feel could help themselves or the students in this time.”

Then talking about how the administrators try to keep the teachers active and socializing, Langheier states, “We have a box in the front office, and when the teachers walk laps around the school, they can put their name in the box to maybe win a prize.”

With this activity, it encourages teachers to get out of their rooms and get moving while also seeing other teachers and getting that in person contact that everyone needs. Teachers are also encouraging their students at home to get moving so they, too, can stay active and maybe get outside for some very much needed break time.

Teachers are always looking out for their students and they have been trying their hardest to make the transition for students as easy as possible. At the same time, teachers had to adjust with changing from hybrid teaching to fully remote learning, and possibly back to hybrid, or even full in-person teaching in January 2021. With this, there has been some struggles, but everyone is working together to try and make these changes as seamless as possible.

# Field Hockey,

*Continued from page 4*

The victory was a turning point for the team, where all the pieces of the puzzle fit into place. The team went on to win their next two games, working in tandem with each other to secure each victory.

The team’s last match was against Amherst High School in the semifinals. Both teams were tied 0-0 as they entered overtime after a grueling 60 minutes of play. Ten minutes later, they entered double overtime where Amherst scored, winning the game. Although Amherst may have won in the books, every girl on that field gave it their all, kept nothing back, and had nothing to be ashamed of.

Although the season was not exactly what the team had been hoping for this year, the girls still found ways to make it memorable.

Captain Ashley Pitz, junior, commented, “Even though the circumstances we faced this season weren’t ideal we still had fun, and it was good to be back on the field with each other.”

The team’s mothers even organized a COVID-friendly Senior Night in honor of the 11 seniors on the team: Camryn Augustine, Jayden D’Angelo, Grace Dubel, Anna Hinchcliffe, Laura Kuehner, Hannah Larson (captain), Kaleigh Lauck, Madison Miranda (captain), Cyara Mattia, Julia Patti, and Isabella Thomas. These girls are all thankful for the opportunity to play field hockey, some for the last time, as many senior athletes were not given the same opportunities.

Hinchcliffe, the team’s starting sweep, echoes these sentiments saying, “I am super grateful that we got the chance to even have a season, let alone make it all the way to the end and play as well as we did. I feel like our confidence was really low at the start, and as the season went on, we really grew together and played great while having fun.”

All in all, the Girls’ Varsity Field Hockey season had a blast making memories and blossoming as a team, making the most of their circumstances.

# AP Exams

*Continued from page 3*

an added anxiety to an already stressful experience for exam takers. Some students taking their last exams were forced to study even more for another test date at least a week later. Many were seniors who had already checked out for the summer, so these technology issues were a big burden for some.

In an interview with Andie Jones, she shared the issues she had with her exam.

“I had an issue with logging into the exam and the code was giving me an error back,” Jones said.

After finally getting logged in, Jones had lost lots of time and was not able to complete the exam on that given day. “There was a lot of added stress having to retake the exam a whole two and a half weeks after the expected date.”

What do you tell a student that has to take the exam over again? After studying and preparing for that test date, students do not want to have to take another test. It is mentally taxing on these students. Teachers did all they could and helped by providing more studying material and key points to review.

Last year, students had the ability to receive a refund from the College Board if they did not want to take the test. Each AP exam is \$90. While some students did this, others did not because they had spent the whole year taking the class and did not want to waste that knowledge. College Board is offering the same refund this year with no fees if students decide to cancel their exams.

The upcoming exams for AP students in 2021 could potentially be held in person. College Board said that if health and safety conditions are met, then schools can offer in-person tests. If this is not possible, there will be a full-length online exam that can be taken from the comfort of your home (as comfortable you can get while taking an AP exam). More updates about the exams are set to come out in the first few months of the new year.

The situation for last year’s exams was not ideal for most. Some students thrived, while others crumbled. Most of the time, students stress over their exams, but the 2020 online AP disaster was the next level for some.



**LEAD Crazy Sock Day**  
Down Syndrome  
Awareness

# Getting Exercise,

Continued from page 2

gen. Over time, this results in greater lung capacity, which is also helpful for fighting off a virus that attacks the respiratory system.

From a scientific standpoint, we know exercise should be a priority, but is it? Perhaps it is not held in that regard by those in higher authority. An article by *WGN9*, titled “Doctors Calling for Gyms to Stay Open as Lawmakers Call for More Shutdowns,” interviewed an infectious disease expert.

“The risk is actually less in the gym than it is in your office space or even your supermarket as far as air turnover. But we know a lot more about this virus than we did six months ago. Touching is not a huge aspect of it even though we encourage washing your hands and using alcohol rents, but really it’s droplet and airborne,” Dr. Vishnu Chundi states.

During this time when public gyms are closed and few of us have access to exercise equipment, we need to be creative. No more going around the circle of machines at the gym.

Mr. Rainville, a science teacher at Iroquois, spoke on how he has been working out during the lockdown, “Luckily, I have weights in my basement, but not enough to do my normal workouts. I’ve been doing a lot more cardio-focused exercises than weightlifting since I don’t have enough weight at home to overload my muscles like I do at the gym.”

Hayden Griebel, who is a senior at Iroquois, said, “Normally I run on the treadmill for ten minutes and then I do some type of circuit workout for my abs, lower body, and upper body. Many of my workouts are just involving my body weight, but I occasionally use the weights we have in the house.”

There are many online resources available for effective workouts that can be purchased from your home. A popular option for at home workouts can be found on TeamBeachBody’s website. TeamBeachBody offers multiple different online subscription plans to fit the needs of people with varying fitness goals. Workouts consist of high energy movements that will help improve cardiovascular health. Every workout is less than an hour and can be done in your living room! The current price of a 12-month online subscription to Beachbody On Demand is one payment of \$99. This allows you to access any workout video on the website.

We are now forced to use the resources available to us. For Rainville, it’s his barbell and limited amount of weights laying around at home. For others, it’s a road to run on, a floor for pushups, a bar for pullups, or some dumbbells for curls. No matter the resources available to you, making exercise a priority is possible, and is also vitally important for your health, especially during a pandemic.

# Spring Renewal,

Continued from page 3

because they keep track of all of the money the students obtain.

Treadwell said, “I was definitely devastated. As both a choir member and the treasurer, that trip had been a goal for so long. That was supposed to be a peak of my high school career with friends; to have it disappear and never see some of those people face to face again was something I grieved for a long time.”

The Student Government is a club full of students who wish to demonstrate what a leader truly is. All high school students can run for a position in this club at the end of the school year. Additionally, they set up for school dances, host lunch activities, and plan for the eventful spirit weeks. The students and the advisor Mrs. Muskopf wish to pursue several events this spring.

With hope, Muskopf shared, “Well, at this point we are planning a winter themed Holly Hanging, a Spring Homecoming, and fingers crossed- Prom in June. Of course, all of this is with fingers crossed!”

Holly Hanging is a tradition Iroquois has created that always brings the holiday spirit alive. It allows the students and faculty to escape the stress they may be feeling and takes them into a world of creativity. This upcoming year, ideas that surfaced and are different than the past. If the school is fortunate Hanging will take place in will be different Christmas the air and are uncertain are experiencing.

During the win- very active. Key Club is and assists on the commu- positive atmosphere. The efforts in making sure eve- cheer.

According to sen- Club is making cards for children’s hospital. We the *Night Before Christ-* home for holiday cheer.”

All the clubs at working diligently in mak- to its potential for students. think of creative new ideas All the clubs in the high fill the school with spirit It is important to focus not come.



## COMING SOON

LEAD Coffee House

LEAD Midnight Bowling

Key Club Beach Clean-up

SGB Powder Puff & Bonfire

Chorus/Band/Orchestra Concerts

tertime, Key Club is being managed by Mrs. McCoy, nity around them to make it a students are putting in their ryone is feeling the holiday

ior Neleah Walker, “Key nursing homes, vets, and also are making a video of *mas*, to send to the nursing

Iroquois High School are ing sure this year is fulfilling It is important to continue to for the students and faculty. school are doing their best to during these troubling times. on what’s lost, but what’s to

# Social Media,

Continued from page 2

which shows others that ac- cepting all sides of one’s self can make a person at home in his or her own skin.

Traylor states, “When I was younger, I al- ways wanted to be an influ- encer that people looked up to and were comfortable with. That is why I have the positive community of fol- lowers that I have; it allows me to be able to interact with them on the daily.”

When influencers interact with their followers and supportive communities, it allows their followers to recieve a sense of empathy, a belief that someone cares about their well-being. Many social media mentors try to avoid interacting with fol- lowers personally because oftentimes there are many negative comments and hate- ful terms used. Some men- tors focus primarily on just their positive community that supports them and encour- ages them in what they do.

Yet, some people believe that social media influencers that are too young aren’t a great a thing.

Senior Ian Aigner states, “I think some of it is great, but I think there is more bad than good. I think Tik Tok kids that are 16 years-old are ruining others’ self-image. Teens are seeing 16 year-old kids that are hav- ing millions of followers, and it is making them feel horri- ble about themselves. They [influencers] also have no idea what is happening in others’ lives and are trying to make a solution to something they aren’t educated about.”

Social media influ- encers are one of the very few jobs that have been af- fected by COVID. It has let many young and courageous teenagers step out of the comfort zone and live life like never before. These so- cial media influencers are making a difference in peo- ple’s lives on a daily basis. They spread smiles and posi- tivity, and try to change our world for the better.

Door 215: Willy Wonka





# Movie Theaters,

*Continued from page 3*

Hypothetically, this idea would have worked; however, with more people being unemployed, less people are willing to spend \$20 to rent a movie. This is leading to most studios realizing that there is no way for them to make a profit off only allowing rentals of the films.

Movies that were scheduled to come out during quarantine have now pushed back their release date to mid to late 2021 on the big screen in attempt to still make a profit.

With the shutting down of theaters and the increased price in movie rentals, people are now finding different ways to watch movies. As a result, streaming services such as Netflix, Disney+, and Hulu are increasing in popularity and causing people who have had these services to use them more often.

It is also likely that people are getting used to streaming movies and will be using the pandemic as an excuse to no longer see movies in theaters. Instead, they opt for watching them in the comfort of their own home.

Now the question is how this will affect movie theaters long term? While the future is unclear, Wcbs radio states that most larger theaters are hoping that they will be able to survive the quarantine and reopen around the spring of 2021.

However, Mxdwn predicts that movie theaters and the way people go to the movies will have to change. They think that going to the movies will be more like a night out, similar to going to see a musical or play. Yet, if this is the case, the price of going to the movies would have to drastically increase in order to sustain the theatres.

They also state that drive-in theaters have still been able to keep their business open, so it is a possibility that going to the drive-in would be more common. The Transit Drive-In, Silver Lake Twin Drive-In, and Loomis Delevan Drive-In are popular outdoor venues in WNY that have been open through Covid-19. However, it is unlikely for them to be able to be a substitute for going to the movies.

How we consume films may be changed due to this pandemic, and most theaters may be out of business, but there is no way to know what the future will hold for movie theaters and studios.

# Teen Depression,

*Continued from page 2*

in an interview, "I do see a difference in my mental health when use of social media is around. When you spend hours on a platform senselessly scrolling or having empty conversations, you'll find yourself losing time or feeling down."

Not only does social media depict a "highlight reel" of people's lives that can be detrimental for teenagers who are trying to find themselves and also fit in, but it can also invoke a sense of being "not good enough" or being alienated from their peers. "FOMO," or the fear of missing out, is very common among teens who see people talking about depression and anxiety on social media, and they want to be able to relate to their peers. A survey of around 750 teens aged 13 to 17 years old from the PEW Research Center found that 97% of teens have social media, and 45% are online constantly.

Lily Hinchcliffe, a junior at Iroquois, stated, "Seeing my friends hanging out on social media can make me feel isolated and left out."

Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and other sites create an endless cycle of feeling empty and alone. From a 2019 PBS article, it is said that increased drug and opioid use and social media are factors that are detrimental to teens' mental health. This may seem pretty obvious, but there are also lesser known ways that social media is raising depression and anxiety in teens, like creating a culture where teens feel the need to self-diagnose or lie about their mental health in order to fit in.

With the increase of people speaking out about their mental struggles, it has almost become a trend for people to have depression and anxiety.

"More and more teenagers are convinced that depression, anxiety, anorexia, and bipolarity are 'cool,' or can make you 'special,'" says Rola Jadayal, the co-author of a social media study and professor at the University of Balamand in Lebanon.

There are numerous posts on Twitter, Instagram, etc. show teens opening up about their dark thoughts and feelings, and these posts have thousands of likes and comments of other teens agreeing, self-diagnosing, and almost encouraging these behaviors. The "aesthetic" posts and hashtags contribute to the "mob mentality" of teens wanting to fit in, and this group seems like an easy one to join.

According to the Mayo Clinic, a 2015 study found that social comparison and feedback seeking by teens using social media and cellphones was linked with depressive symptoms. Many teens make the mistake of mixing up "feeling depressed" with having actual depression, and the same thing with other disorders like anxiety. This is creating a very harmful environment and headspace for kids everywhere.

The most important thing to remember is that social media is not real life, and anyone can create an unrealistic ideal of life. It is also very important to know that nobody is alone in this world, and everyone has someone who loves and cares for them from family to friends to teachers.

The national suicide hotline is 800-273-8255. Don't be afraid to reach out. The best thing to do is create an open, safe dialogue for teens to be able to express their feelings and get the help they need.

# Senior Stockings,

*Continued from page 3*

They could decorate them with Christmas decorations or Iroquois themed or 2020. There were numerous students who participated in this fun idea.

Senior, Kaleigh Lauck said, "I decorated my car with red tinsel, twinkling lights, a wreath in the front and a lit wreath on the back of my car. I also decorated my steering wheel by wrapping the red tinsel around it."

Following Lauck, Joey Doraski had a lit-up Nativity scene in the front seat of his car and weaved Christmas lights throughout the remainder of the car.

Candy was provided by Mrs. Cantie and LEAD, while Mrs. Slowik personalized keychains so the seniors would have something to look back on. When the students received their treats given by Ms. Chace, Ms. Edbauer took pictures for the yearbook.

Many of the seniors are devastated about this year. A common theme that they fear is the unknown of what will happen within these next few months. They question whether the biggest events of their high school career will still happen: Prom and Graduation.

"As for the beginning of the year, I was looking forward to Homecoming, the Pep Rally, and a volleyball season. Now, I am hoping for Graduation and Prom. Overall, I was looking forward to being with people and just experiencing the kind of excitement of it all," senior Allison Nottis said.

This event would not have been possible without the help of the Iroquois High School staff, specifically: Mrs. Payne, Ms. Chace, Mrs. Slowik, Mrs. Kiblin, Mrs. Czech, Mrs. Cantie, Mrs. Moran, Mr. Dombrowski, Ms. Edbauer, Dr. Ramirez, Mrs. Muskopf, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Beetow, and Ms. Langheier.

Additionally, thank you to senior Jacob Cantie for thinking of this spectacular idea and the Student Government for spreading the word.

All in all, the seniors are grateful for each experience they will be fortunate enough to have during this time. There is still hope for all future events, even though the future is unpredictable. This year will be what the students make of it; therefore, it is important to stay positive.



**Senior Memories:**  
LEAD Winter Walk 2020





# Turf Field,

*Continued from page 1*

"Turf definitely changes how the game is played. When on grass, it seems like both teams are playing underwater, bogged down by the grass's thickness and holes. But, as soon as you get on turf, the ball just glides. That difference in turf changes the game by allowing longer passes and much more speed," Miranda noted.

Tahlia Kosek, senior on the soccer team, agrees with Miranda, stating, "Game play is much faster as both athletes and a soccer ball can move faster on turf. It helps that there are no random potholes or areas that can trip players up like there are on grass fields."

The consistency of a turf surface not only increases speed of play, but it also serves to prevent injury. Athletes don't have to worry about rolling their ankles on an uneven surface or slipping mid-run in the muddy grass.

According to John Kenefick, a freshman lineman on the football team, the turf is usually a softer surface that makes tackles less painful. After all, it is far more cushioned than normal cut grass.

Furthermore, turf allows for smoother ball handling for a variety of sports, particularly field hockey and soccer. It creates faster more skillful game play. The different style of play can be a lot to adjust to for a person used to playing on a slower, more resistant surface such as grass.

Miranda says, "I know that when I switch from grass to turf, it takes time to adjust to the different conditions, style of play, and speed of the game. This adjustment period could determine the outcome of a game if not made quickly enough."

Kosek reports a similar experience for soccer, and stated, "On a turf field, the ball will move a lot faster with less effort. This difference makes players need time to adjust how they are hitting the ball. Also, once the ball starts rolling, it doesn't stop, so the speed is something you have to get used to."

The opportunity to practice and play on a higher quality surface is one Iroquois athletes have been waiting for. Miranda believes practicing and playing on turf will be a major benefit to field sports teams. She stated that other teams that practice on turf all the time have an advantage over a visiting team that practices on grass. Luckily, in just a few years, Iroquois athletes and spectators will be able to enjoy the advantages of turf.

"I think Iroquois sports teams will finally be on an equal playing field with other schools in our area," says Miranda.

But, the benefits don't end with the athletic program itself. There are positive effects for the entire Iroquois community. A beautiful, modern sports facility will increase game attendance and spark school pride.

Kenefick believes that the new facility would improve attendance to the football games and other athletic events.

"I think more people would go when things are nicer and more comfortable," he said.

To that point, turf allows for faster, more exciting game play. Alongside the upgraded bleachers and sound system, the field will make watching the games themselves more comfortable and enjoyable. This is expected to increase attendance to the games and in turn, improve community involvement in the sports program.

Vetter says that she is very happy that Iroquois will soon have a state-of-the-art sports facility, and she reinforced the belief that it will be a benefit to the community.

"My hope is that the completion of this project will create a sense of pride within our community that will bring us all together to build the family atmosphere that is part of our tradition."

These new turf fields will be an advantage to the school in terms of maintenance and all-weather utility, but the benefits to our athletes and our community will also be significant. Ultimately, Iroquois community members can look forward to the upcoming renovations of our athletic facilities.

## LEAD Spring Door Decorating Winners!

### First Place (tie)

222 Mrs. Grzybowski  
*Butterflies*

215 Mrs. Cantie  
*Willy Wonka*

### Second Place

192 Ms. Wagner  
*Mickey St. Pat's*

### Special Award

Maintenance Staff  
*Spring Cleaning*



Door 222: Butterflies

Striving to be  
the Best

## Tomahawk Staff

- Olivia Nuwer
- Anna Hinchcliff
- Mikayla Durkin
- Zechariah Franklin
- Aidan Gauthier
- Hayden Griebel
- Emily Gordon
- Andie Jones
- Grace Kwiatkowski
- Laura Kuehner
- Madeline Maclean
- Avery Mengay
- Owen Szeplowski
- Isabella Thomas
- Mrs. Cantie, Advisor



## Senior Memories:

## Grade 11 Powder Puff Team