

Knight Krier



A production of Norwin High School Journalism Classes

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 6, 2025 • VOLUME 67 • ISSUE 2 • 251 MCMAHON DRIVE NORTH HUNTINGDON,

The Road Ahead

by Addison Baer & Miya Valecko

Norwin weather disrupts schedule

By: Elizabeth Petteway



Imagine you walk outside, and it feels oddly cold today. You look down at your phone to check the weather only to find out that it's 8 degrees! Looking at this cold temperature, one would assume that a delay would be called at least, but that's not always the case. The Norwin guidelines call for a multitude of factors to be in play to implement a two-hour delay that can cause some confusion as to when delays and flexible instruction days (FID) will occur. Both follow the 2-hour delay bell schedule.

According to the official Norwin website: "School delays or cancellations due to cold weather are based on weather forecasts which take into consideration temperatures, wind chill factors, and gusty winds."

Another factor in deciding to delay is First Student, the busing company Norwin uses to transport students daily. The company lets the Superintendent and a few others aware of how the roads and buses are doing and if they are fit for transport.

According to the official Norwin website: "Input from the District's busing contractor, First Student, is received after they have driven various roadways in the School District firsthand. This procedure normally begins at 4:30 a.m. so that a decision can be made if a delay or cancellation seems warranted."

FID days are expected to occur when the conditions outside that called for a delay show no signs of improvement throughout the day.

"If road conditions are bad in the morning but expected to improve," said Superintendent Dr. Natalie McCracken, "the District will call a delay to give the road departments time to treat the roads before busses transport students. In some cases, the snow or ice continues, and it necessitates making the delay turn into a FID."

Continued on pg. 3...



Senior College Decisions

Top: Dominic Cerilli (University of Pittsburgh), Addison Kuehn (West Virginia University), Mackenzie Wray (Kent State), Bottom: Michael Crnkovic (Saint Francis University), Avery Brozeski (Clarion University), and Julia Bursick (Duquesne University)

As the first day of the fall semester of senior year begins, students all across the country feel an unsettling sense of excitement, mixed with anxiety and dread. It's the time of year where every conversation seems to revolve around college, covering up a world of anticipation and self-reflection. For many seniors, the college application process can feel like the final stop in 12 years of education. It's not just about picking a school, but also determining one's identity and the path that lies ahead of them.

For most, the process of choosing a college starts with the dreaded list of potential schools. The choices in this list represent meaning, personal struggle, and an ever-growing sense of self: Do I go to the school my parents have dreamed of my whole life, or look for a place that feels like home?

"You will meet a lot of influences in your life, but make sure you know who you are before you let someone decide," senior Parker Wills said.

As the application deadlines approach,

the crushing intensity of these decisions only gets stronger. With every school added to the list, a student also weighs their self-worth. There's an unspoken (yet deeply rooted) pressure that comes with every submitted application. It's the same pressure that constantly assures you that college is not a personal choice, but a necessary milestone to success. For many students, this can be unbelievably overwhelming.

Among the most crucial parts of the application process is the personal statement. The essay asks seniors to reflect on who they are and what they've overcome. It's in moments like these that the college process begins to feel less like an obligation, but a personal achievement. These essays ask more than just what you've done, but who you are. The writing process can be deeply rewarding for some people, offering an opportunity to process their own self-discovery. On the other hand, for some, it can be a grueling process that brings up unresolved personal doubts.

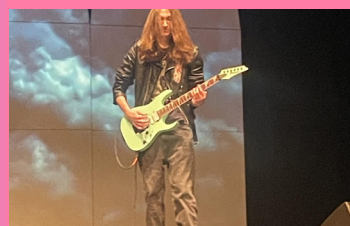
Another piece of the application pro-

cess is letters of recommendation, which are often overshadowed. These letters are meant to offer a view into one's character from a perspective that isn't their own. The first challenge is simply asking. After years of hard work, it can sometimes feel weirdly vulnerable to ask someone else to speak on your behalf. Suddenly, your fate is at the hands of someone else. Then, there's the pressure of choosing the right person/someone who knows you well and has seen your growth. Another stress factor can be the timing. Teachers have a long list of students to help, and deadlines always seem fast approaching. In many ways, these letters can be the strongest voice of an application speaking to who you are behind the grades and achievements.

While the emotional aspects of applying to college are challenging, financial worries add another layer of complexity entirely. For students, many fear not being able to afford an education is a worry that never fully dissipates. As applications continue **Continued on pg. 2...**

What's Inside?

Norwin Talent Show (pg. 4)



Cheer to States! (pg. 5)



Inside the Classroom (pg. 6)



Check out all of our publications at knightkrier.com



Advice from seniors

By: Miya Valecko

Start thinking about potential colleges early. You don't have to know your major, but definitely start thinking of places to go before it gets too overwhelming. **-Olivia Lane**

Prioritize your interests and make decisions based off what you want for yourself because it's your future. **-Gabi Astrab**

Go where you feel like you belong, your happiness is the most important thing when you decide for college! **-Addy Keuhn**

-Addy Keuhn

Don't rush your future. It may seem like a lot at one time, but you have so much room to work with after high school. Focus on your hobbies and character traits; if you like making people feel better, maybe medicine is a good choice, or if you like coding on computers, pursue something in computer science. Let your future come to you, don't chase something you don't truly desire. **-Alaina Fonzi**

"Having to wait until February or March for a lot of my college decisions has honestly been so stressful." Most of my friends have committed to a college, and I just feel so behind not knowing where I'm supposed to be going in just a few short months." **-Ella Kelly**

It's okay not to know what you want to do with your life, you're still just a teenager. **-Ameer Elatrache**

Don't be disappointed if you don't get into your dream school. You'll end up where you're supposed to be. **-Aaron Wong**

-Aaron Wong

Not everything is going to go your way but don't let that stop you from pursuing your dreams. **-Michael Crnkovic**

-Michael Crnkovic

Get involved in your school and community! When you're applying to college your senior year, it's a lot easier to be sure of yourself when you've pursued your passions and can speak confidently about them. **-Emma Reese**

-Emma Reese

Figure out a plan and stick with it **-Kyla Coyne**

Don't feel like you have to go somewhere because it's normal, follow your heart and choose the path you feel is best for you in more than one way. **-John Olshanki**

-John Olshanki

"The Road Ahead" con... pg. 1

to flow, forms such as FAFSA find students wondering if they will even qualify for financial aid, and how unmanageable their student loans will become. The college process, at times, can feel like an impenetrable barrier, in which students can meet every expectation, yet still fail to meet the financial requirements to attend their dream schools.

"The hardest part was the financial choices that have to be made when applying and committing to colleges," senior Ella Simpson said.

They become faced with the harsh reality of unfair decisions, and the overwhelming world of financial risk. At times, financial stress can feel isolating. It's hard to talk about, especially when everyone seems to be at a different place.

Sometimes, college can be more about just what you want. It can also be about fulfilling the expectations and hopes of your family. Parents often project their own goals onto their children, believing that a certain school or degree program will unlock opportunities for their children they never had in their youth. The weight of these expectations can be suffocating. It's one thing to navigate the emotional and financial burden of the application process, but it's another to feel like every decision you make will affect the livelihood of others. The desire to please parents can often overcome personal aspirations and cause inner conflict.

Once the applications are finally submitted, a new kind of stress begins. The waiting period feels impossible, filled with questions and self-doubt. The quiet anxiety builds for days, into weeks, and months, marked by the hope that every time you open the mail, it'll contain the news you've been waiting for. In many ways, this waiting period can be just as draining as the application process itself.

Often, the first responses can feel like a judgment call of personal worth. An acceptance letter may bring relief and accomplishment, but a rejection can create feelings of doubt. However, the truth is that those letters do not define who you are. A college acceptance is not the end of the road, it just offers a potential path to travel on. Throughout the entire process, it's important to remember that you are more

than just a GPA, application, or SAT score. An individual cannot be captured by a letter or grade.

The Near Future for

Norwin Seniors

Every year, Norwin seniors are faced with the task of completing their final year of high school in addition to making one of the most major decisions of their life--a daunting, yet exhilarating task. A mix of emotions spreads throughout the senior class, yet they are united by having to all answer one question: What do I want my near future to look like? Regardless, having to answer a difficult question is nothing new to Norwin students. They've practiced doing that their entire lives.

Creating a vision of the future is different for everyone. There are endless possibilities and a number of factors that go into making important decisions. Because everyone's life and situation is different, their futures are going to look different as well.

Emma Reese, a senior and of the top three students in the class of 2025, has been faced with the ultimate decision after years of dedicated work. Currently torn between the competitive Notre Dame and Villanova, Reese ultimately hopes that her decision will leave her feeling happy and achieved.

"I applied to more selective schools, so getting in was the most concerning part," Emma Reese said. "College admissions are insane today, and it's so hard to be confident in the process when people constantly post their stats online."

Athletics have also steered the way for many Norwin seniors.

"I got recruited by my coach at a tournament and found out about the school at that tournament," senior Garrett Henning said. "I wouldn't have even known about the school if I was not recruited for athletics."

After many years on the field, Senior Julia Bursick is committed to Duquesne University for Division 1 soccer and pursuing a future in Early Childhood Education. For Bursick, playing soccer and finding a college with her major is what she valued most in her decision. Dominic Cerilli also valued his sport and major in his decision, leading him to confidently commit to University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown to study market-

ing and play golf.

For many, going to college is not absolute.

"I got accepted by the University of Valley Forge, but I have found that college is not necessarily my ideal path," said senior Cami Browne, a current student who trains Firefighting and EMS at CWCTC. Using her training, Browne plans to pursue a future in dispatch as well as EMS.

For others, the future looks completely different than a university or a trade. Senior Genevieve Evans has plans to serve the country. Enlisted in the Navy, Evans will be working as a hospital corpsman to provide medical assistance to Corps personnel.

"The hardest part was how many choices there are to pick from and making sure I'm making the right choice," said Evans. Senior Lucy Traficante also has ambitions to serve the nation in a different way.

Traficante looks forward to serving in the AmeriCorps. Often referred to as "the domestic Peace Corps," the AmeriCorps is an agency dedicated to serving the nation to meet the needs of communities.

While many have made definite decisions for their futures, numerous other seniors are still playing the waiting game. Two among them are Ameer Elatrache and Jaden Charney, who are patiently and anxiously awaiting a response from the University of Pittsburgh main campus. Over a handful of other Norwin seniors are in the same position, either being forced to wait on decisions, scholarships, or simply taking an extra time to ensure they make the right decision.

The class of 2025 possesses future scholars, athletes, artists, musicians, politicians, life-savers, authors, managers, activists, and so much more. While a new world is ahead of them, they are ahead of the world. For them, the future is now.

While making such a large decision as only a new adult is a stressful and demanding challenge, the Norwin senior class can relate by going through the process together. Even though everyone's process and idea of a bright future is different, they are all posed with the same question. The near future is in their hands, and they can walk together palm in palm one last time before taking their final steps on Norwin campus and bidding farewell to the people they've spent years of their life with.



FBLA competes at the Regional Leadership Conference

By: Grace Fleckenstein

On Tuesday, December 17, members of the FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) at Norwin High School headed to St. Vincent College to compete in the annual Regional Leadership Conference, and were awarded over 20 trophies.

Due to an extreme snow storm last year, several students in FBLA did not get to go to St. Vincent to receive awards in their respective events. However, this year there was not any dangerous weather conditions, and around 30 students traveled to the college to either receive recognition for this performance in an online objective test or to perform their events to a panel of judges. At the end of the conference, students got the chance to eat at the Westmoreland Mall in their professional clothes and with their various trophies.

At 7:30 in the morning on December 17, FBLA students gathered at the Knight Head in the front of the high school before heading on the bus to the competition. While some students participated in online objective tests—ranging from Business Law to Journalism—at the high school a week before, other students competed in performance events at St. Vincent.

Before the event itself, many students prepared for their events in separate ways. For those competing in a performance event, a lot of time was put into rehearsing their online presentations while those that participated in online events spent time studying before the competition date.

Unlike last year, students at Norwin did not have the opportunity to study extra over the winter break, and instead had to prepare for an earlier competition date—on December 17.

“To prepare, I reviewed a lot of Quizlets and the handbook that went along with my



Over 30 Norwin FBLA students attended the Regional Leadership Conference at St. Vincent College this year.

event (Introduction to FBLA),” said sophomore Jillian Ryba. “As a first-year member, I feel that the event went well, considering I placed higher than I expected.”

Several students participated in groups to combine several interests and strengths of theirs—to achieve the best chance at winning their events. Seniors Hanna Klingensmith, Kathryn Metzger, and Emma Reese competed in the Business Ethics team event—combining online objective tests, a case study, and an in-person presentation at St. Vincent College. The team ended up winning first place with the combined scores from all of their aspects of the event.

“To prepare for our event, we each took a few minutes to look over some recommended study guides before the objective test,” said senior Hanna Klingensmith. “Then, we had to submit a report on a provided case study, which we collaborated on over the course of several weeks. Each of us answered a section and then proofread each other’s work. As part of our project, we chose three local businesspeople to in-

terview and integrated their responses into our paper.”

After presenting, students felt confident in their skills and abilities to present under pressure in a business environment. Others felt as if the experience helped to better prepare them for a career beyond high school.

“I loved presenting to the judge,” said Emma Reese. “As someone who wants to study business in college, these types of extracurricular are always helpful for me to apply the knowledge I learn in high school to the professional world.”

While many individuals and groups headed to their presenting rooms throughout the introduction of the regional conference, other students stayed in a large room and participated in group activities that highlighted primary aspects of the business world. For example, students were instructed to split up into large groups and then create a marketing idea—including a tagline and a plan for a visual advertisement—for a hot sauce

brand. Additionally, students who did not compete in an in-person event listened to several speakers—who are also professors at St. Vincent—to learn more about the college and professional environment.

“My favorite part was when we were all split into groups and got to practice marketing for a fake brand,” said senior Josephine Barle. “It was a really cool hands-on experience into the marketing world.”

Students also were split up into four large groups to see how well they advised people in terms of accounting principles.

After various activities and presentations by professors at St. Vincent, students were directed to listen to the recipients of the top three prizes in each individual category. Mr. Aftanas, the FBLA advisor and law teacher at Norwin, read off all of the names of the top three students that read over 60 different competitive events—ranging from online tests to in-person presentations.

In January, Mr. Aftanas and other officers of the FBLA club at Norwin held a meeting to discuss the upcoming state leadership conference that takes place in April at Hershey, Pennsylvania. However, the price of the state leadership conference was extremely expensive according to Mr. Aftanas and other members, leading to nearly no students signing up to compete in the state conference. Regardless, Norwin students placed extremely well at the Regional Leadership Conference, with over 30 individuals qualifying for the state conference in April.

“My favorite part of the RLC at St. Vincent was getting to see everyone represent Norwin in a positive light,” said Ryba. “It was so rewarding and exciting to see my friends succeed!”

Weather con...

Continued from pg. 1

However, the school district cannot use Flexible Instruction Days (or FID) every time the weather conditions go south. Each school district must apply for a license to use a set amount of FID days.

According to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s official website: “The number of FIDs may not exceed five (5) days per school year. A FID used for one building counts as one of the five days permitted each year for the entire public school entity.”

In addition to Flexible Instruction Days, districts may apply for remote instruction days (RID) that some school districts implement to make wintertime easier by setting it up for spontaneous weather. Despite their limitations, using both FID and RID days has its uses and place in the school year.

“The benefit of using a FID over a school closure is that closures result in having to make up the instructional day,” said Dr. McCracken, “which could change the school



calendar by either changing days within the calendar or adding days to the end of the school year.”

This year, Norwin School District has used 4 out of 5 FID days allotted to them this year due to the 21 days of heavy snowfall and single-digit temperatures. This is because the area around Westmoreland County in the month of January has been subject to a polar vortex that was pushed down from far north. A polar vortex is an area of low pressure and cold temperatures that surrounds both of the poles. Sometimes during the winter months, the northern vortex will expand beyond its normal borders and bring its frigid temperatures down to us via the jet stream of air that flows across the continent.

Will the winter weather continue? Or will Punxsutawney Phil turn things around and bring about an early spring.

“So I think it’s gonna be rainy,” said physics teacher, and resident meteorologist, Mr. Douglas Knipple, “but there may be another winter storm out there.”

Meet Norwin’s New JROTC teacher!

By: Liam Murphy

This November, Norwin High School welcomed Lieutenant Colonel Jason Luhn as our new teacher of the JROTC (Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps) class, a class designed to help develop the character of the students enrolled and prepare them for possible future military enlistment.

Q: What is your background going into teaching?

A: I spent twenty five years in the Air Force. I graduated from the Air Force academy in 1995 and I was an Air Craft maintenance officer and pilot of KC-135 tankers for the 171st refueling wing at the Pittsburgh International Airport.

Q: What do you enjoy about teaching in your field?

A: Getting a chance to know the kids that are in my classes and helping them achieve the things and discover the things that they



are most passionate about.

What is your approach to teaching your students and preparing them for their future in the field?

A: I like to use real world examples and experience that they can relate to. Both things that I have seen and been through and done, as well as things they experience on a regular basis.

If there is one thing you want your students to know about you, what is it?

A: That I am here for them to help them as much as I can.

Any cool places you have traveled to?

A: I have been to Mongolia, Iceland, Ecuador, and Afghanistan.

What’s your favorite movie?

A: A movie called The Right Stuff.

Norwin proves its got talent in 2025

By: Liam Murphy and Michael Makay



Daniel Matta (12)



Null Kieffer (12)



Serena Borelli (12)

On January 17th, the annual Norwin Got's Talent event was held in the Norwin High School auditorium. Fourteen talented Norwin students competed in the competition, which was judged by Norwin teachers Señor Ryan Caldwell, Mr. Brian Fleckenstein, and Mrs. Sara Hawley.

Harrison Mordaunt (11) kicked off the show with a bang with a performance of "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana. "Music has always run in my family," says Junior contender Harrison Mordaunt. "Just doing things like playing with my band is honestly fun for me."

Then next up was Lorelei King (9) singing the song "Greatest Ad," followed by Madelyn Woods (9) who sang "Mr. Perfectly Fine" by Taylor Swift. Next up to the stage was Serena Borelli (12) who sang the song "Burn" by Ellie Goulding for her performance. Borelli's performance earned her third place in the overall competition.

The next performer was Gordon Howard (12) who performed the song "Holy Wars" by Megadeth with his guitar. Afterwards, Bennett Kirkland (11) sang an original song.

Coming up next was Faith Shepherd (9) singing "Part Of Your World" from The Little Mermaid, who ended up winning the People's Choice award, an award voted on by the audience through a Google Form.

The next performer was Emma Belchick (10) who signed the song "Thank You For The Music" by ABBA. The performer who came next was Robert Arth (11) who sang the song "Basket Case" by Green Day with his guitar.

Null Kieffer (12) performed next, performing an original song they wrote called "En Garde." This performance earned them second place in the overall competition. "I enjoy getting to make things that other people can relate to and see themselves in," said Kieffer, who has written, produced, and performed many original songs, having even published a full album. "I want to make songs that other people can be comforted by in their darkest moments."

Next up to the stage was Emma Graham (11) singing the song "Treat You Better" by Shawn Mendes, followed by Daniel Matta (12) who performed a guitar solo of the song "Enter Sandman" by Metallica. For his performance, the judges awarded Matta first place in the competition. "I was very surprised my name got called," said Matta. "I did not expect to win the talent show quite like that. I hope I can eventually make my own music, play in a band, sell out in the arenas, and tour the world even though it's probably impossible. I really want to do it."

Last, but not least, was the performance by Olivia Lane (12) who gave a performance of Irish Dance To Dueling Violins.

This was Señor Caldwell's and Mrs. Hawley's first time judging Norwin's Got Talent, while Mr. Fleckenstein had been judging the event since it began over ten years ago. "It was a great experience," said Caldwell. "I was kind of unsure how to go about it going into it, but then once we got started it was a lot of fun and I got to see a lot of great talents from all the different students here at Norwin. There were a lot of fantastic performances."

"I love seeing students showcase their passions outside the classroom. Every day, I get to witness their intelligence and dedication in academics, but this event gives me the chance to see their creativity, talent, and hard work in a whole new light," said Hawley. "The best part of judging Norwin's Got Talent was seeing the sheer variety of talent on stage and the energy from the crowd. Every performer brought something special, whether it was a powerful vocal performance, an impressive dance routine, or a completely unexpected talent like the guitar solos, rock band, or the two students who performed original pieces!"

Norwin's Got Talent was a spectacular night overall, with many amazing performances from the incredibly talented students of Norwin High School. We hope to see any aspiring performers on that stage next year!



Faith Shepherd (9)



Olivia Lane (12)



Madelyn Woods (9)

Norwin Esports team wins big

By: Liam Murphy

Norwin Esports won two titles in December. On Wednesday, Dec. 11, the Norwin Esports Overwatch 2 team defeated Scotch Plains Fanwood High School online at Norwin High School and was named the PlayVS Mid-Atlantic Region Champion for Overwatch 2, with over 50 teams in the conference. On Sunday, Dec. 15, the Norwin Esports Valorant team competed against Mohawk Area High School online at Norwin High School for the Pennsylvania Esports State Championship. After winning two out of three games, the Norwin team was named the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Esports Association's District 2 Keystone State Champions for the game Valorant.

The winning Valorant team consisted of seniors Korbin Born, Grace Fleckenstein, Vincent Matthews, Braden Rose, and sophomore Joshua Elliott.

"I am very proud of how quickly our team skills grew," said sophomore Joshua Elliott. "For example, in the middle of the season, we had an embarrassing loss to Franklin Regional, but by the end of the season the tables turned, and we beat them with ease."

The winning Overwatch 2 team consisted of seniors Sean Cardiff, Connor Fisher, Conner Harper, Joey Klass, Landon Kozak, Parker Wills, and juniors John Holland and Jakub Sadowski.

"Mr. Cicconi and I are most proud of how all of our esports teams rallied this season and made it into the playoffs," said Esports club advisor Mr. Brandon Salany. "Our Rocket League team unfortunately got



The Valorant team poses for a photo together after winning the D2 state competition.

knocked out in the 2nd of 4 rounds. Our Chess team made it to the finals of 50 other teams in their conference and just missed winning in the final round on the final "table" with a costly blunder. That leaves our Overwatch 2 and also our Valorant team that was able to impressively

bring home Norwin's first 2 esports titles this season. Epic performances by both teams throughout the season and playoffs. They communicated extremely well and adapted quickly with clever character changes to match specific map selections and their opponents' chosen line-up."

"I would like to improve the view of Esports because there are many people who I think would love to play, but are scared to be seen as weird," said Elliott. "I loved how inclusive everyone has been. I am the only sophomore that played during the finals, but I felt like I was a part of their group the moment we started playing."

The Esports season will begin again in February, and anyone interested in joining should contact Mr. Salany in Room 210 or Mr. Cicconi in Room 203.

"Our team rosters for Valorant and Overwatch are occupied heavily by seniors," said Mr. Salany. "This means that next school year's teams will look very different than in the Fall season. This also provides an awesome opportunity for interested students to join our ranks now to grow alongside some very talented players into starting positions they could hold for their remaining years at Norwin."

Norwin students propose Morgan's Message as a new club

By: Michael Makay and Joseph Cramer

Norwin students are proposing a new addition to Norwin's vast list of clubs this fall. That new club is called Morgan's Message, which is a national club that many schools have, but a brand new chapter will be started at Norwin High.

Morgan's Message is a club focused on eliminating the stigma surrounding the mental health of high school and collegiate student-athletes. The founders of this club push for mental health in athletics to be treated the same as physical health. In creating a better environment mentally, the club looks to encourage students to open up in safe spaces, peer-to-peer communication, and they want to empower student athletes that may be suffering all on their own.

The namesake of the club comes from the story of Morgan Rodgers who was a student athlete herself. She was an optimistic athlete and was incredibly talented in lacrosse. She poured countless hours into training and devoted herself completely to her sport and the people around her. Her hard work would pay off when she was recruited to play DI lacrosse at Duke.

Going into her sophomore year of college at Duke playing lacrosse she suffered a terrible knee injury that had a long recovery time of 12 months. Over these 12 months, her self-worth plummeted and her mental state was reduced to rubble. She hid all of this away under a fake smile, until it finally became too much to bear. As a result, she died by suicide on July 11, 2019.

"I wanted to start this

club because I felt like it's a personal thing for me and sports," said freshman Mary Jane Brosey. "Everyone should come together to spread awareness about mental health."

That's why Morgan's Message was created to carry on her legacy of positivity and strength. Their end goal is to help athletes like Morgan who may be struggling, but not know how to voice their struggles and prefer to suffer in silence.

"The club will open up conversations so people feel free to talk about their problems and just have a place to talk in general," Brosey said. "It's my goal to help end the stigma around student athlete's mental health."

Fueled by the message of this organization Norwin student Mary Jane Brosey, moved to start the Norwin branch of this club. Brosey urges any student-athlete who is struggling or not to join and support the club and the message that it is trying to convey. With the club just starting there will be posters up throughout the Norwin halls with QR codes for students to scan to join the Google Classroom.

As for planned events, nothing is set in stone yet. Although Brosey has some fun ideas for the club like making bracelets, T-shirts, and other games that are for team bonding.

Any student interested in supporting athletes' mental health should come out and join the club. Students can find more information on Norwin's chapter of Morgan's Message on their Instagram @nhs_morgansmessage.



Competitive Cheer finishes 4th in state!

By: Liam Murphy

On Saturday, Jan. 4, the Norwin High School competitive cheer team competed at Hempfield High School against 17 other teams from the WPIAL. The squad placed 8th in the competition overall with a final score of 84.1 and managed to qualify for the state championship, where they finished 4th in the entire state!

Last season in 2024, the Norwin team qualified for states placing 10th with a final score of 79.2, showing improvement this year from last season. The team ended up qualifying for nationals, but unfortunately did not place.

"I am so proud of the growth each athlete has made this season," said first-year coach Sarah Brooks. "They have grown in individual skills and being good teammates. They are all determined to make each time better, and that is so fun to be a part of."

"When it comes to the team, I am most proud of the girls for adjusting and changing their old habits from previous years," said Alyssa George (12). "It has not been the easiest to start this new team but without everyone being completely committed it wouldn't have been possible."

Other members of the team agreed when it came to the progress and growth of the team.

"I am most proud of the shift of our attitudes in the past year," said Molly Geissler (12). "Cheerleading is a very mental sport and not only have we worked on having



The cheer team made it to states this year and took a photo after competing against Hempfield High School and placing 8th overall.

consistent positive attitudes, but we are also open to working hard and trying new things. Because we have been able to adjust our mindset and have a close bond, the team works super well together which is incredibly important."

"I am most proud of our teams' hard work and dedication to make our routine better," said team captain Addison Pons (12). "The girls put in all their time and effort to get reps in to clean our routine."

Despite the team's success at the WPIAL competition, they still feel there are aspects of their game they could improve on in the future.

"I think that the team needs to work

the most on achieving consistent full-out routines," said Geissler. "We often have one or two mistakes in every run and getting those runs perfect without any mistakes multiple times in a row. If we prepare consistently, we will be more confident while competing."

"Our strongest thing we need to work on is our confidence," said George. "Our coaches have provided us an amazing routine and we can physically perform it very well; we all need a strong mindset and great attitudes!"

"Consistency is what the team most needs to work on," said Brooks. "It has been a battle learning the 'no matter what'

mentality, but they are getting better and better with every practice. This group of girls are the foundation of what we are trying to build Norwin Cheer to be, and they are doing a wonderful job setting the standard. They were super nervous for WPIALS – and now that they have that under their belt, I am sure they will be ready to go for what is to come. The outcome of WPIALS wasn't what we wanted with a few mistakes, and now they know what that feels like and won't let it happen again."

The Norwin High School Competitive Cheer team will be competing at states in Reading, Pennsylvania on the 30th and 31st of January. If they qualify for Nationals, they will compete at Disney from February 6th to the 11th.

"The 2024-2025 team is very devoted to doing our best and working very hard every practice," said Lauren Zona (12). "Before WPIALS, we practiced for two hours each day of the week, wanting nothing more than to do the best we could at this competition. While we may not have put our best performance out on the mat at WPIALS, we have big things ahead for our last two competitions, and are determined to do amazing at states."

"I am super optimistic that they are going to do better at the next 2 competitions," said Brooks.

"I have high hopes for the team the rest of the season," said Geissler.

Brothers in Strength: Twin brother power lift their way to the top

By: Noah Carney and Miya Valecko

Basketball, football and baseball are all typical sports found in high school sports competitions. However senior-twin brothers Aaron Wong and Aidan Shieh compete in a different type of sport, competitive powerlifting.

Competitive powerlifting is a sport which revolves around strength, dedication, and consistency. The sport of powerlifting is a weight lifting competition that consists of three main lifts or categories: the bench press, the back squat, and the deadlift. In powerlifting you must hit certain standards regarding technique such as depth in the back squat and bench press. If your form hits the standards it needs to, and your lift is successful you will receive three white lights meaning the lift counts. However if something goes wrong with your form or within the lift, you will receive a red light, and a lift receiving 2 or more red lights will not qualify for your total. In order to get your total your total you add the the successful lifts pounds total. For example if you bench press 200 pounds, squat 300, and deadlift 400, all successfully your total will be 900 pounds. The placements are given based on the highest to lowest totals in each weight class (weight classes are used to separate different sized lifters based on weight).

Powerlifting is a sport practiced across the world, and for Aidan and Aaron, their journey into the world of weights started in Taiwan. The brothers lived in the country partially during their 7th and 8th grade school years. During their time there, they often passed a small, intriguing gym. After their mother asked the gym about lessons for Aidan and Aaron, they were introduced to the sport by Taiwan weightlifters.

Powerlifting and weightlifting are two different types of competitive lifting. To recap, powerlifting focuses on the training of three main lifts being the squat, bench, and deadlift. Competitive weightlifters of-

ten compete with two main lifts being the snatch and the clean and jerk.

In Taiwan, Aidan and Aaron started out learning foundational movements, practicing good form with the basics. They also learned competitive weightlifting specific movements. After the brothers returned to Norwin for their 9th grade year, they both participated in Norwin wrestling. During their time wrestling, the brothers found a love for bodybuilding which prompted them to continue to train for into their sophomore year with some powerlifting training sprinkled into their routine. Both taking a greater interest in the sport of powerlifting in their junior year, the brothers decided to join an online program by a man named John Haack, who holds multiple world records and is currently considered one of the best powerlifters of all time.

"I think we just found a passion in it. We found that we could be really good at this," said the brothers.

Aidan and Aaron currently train at a gym with experienced powerlifters who provide them with advice and assistance during their training. Even with their advanced training and support system within the powerlifting world, the brothers have yet to compete in a powerlifting meet. However, they do plan to compete in their first meet



Aidan Shieh and Aaron Wong train together for an upcoming competitive powerlifting competition.

in April of 2025. Another Norwin senior, Conner Harper, will also be participating in this competition.

Currently, Aidan and Aaron are in pre-prep season where they are training on a volume program, meaning they are focusing on muscle building through muscle fatigue. This type of program works in weekly schedule where one week Aidan and Aaron may focus on higher repetition

a with relatively low weight, and the next week may focus on lower repetition with higher weight. An important factor of their program is the deload week where the brothers

"When we first started the volume program, it was so hard. We were doing our squat, bench, and deadlift and they were all relatively higher weight. It takes a while for your muscles to get used to high reps, so it started off really hard. It took a while, honestly, to get used to it," said Aaron.

Another important aspect of powerlifting is maintaining weight. Powerlifting competitions are separated by weight class and gender, meaning competitors are all within the same weight range and gender. Powerlifting works similarly to wrestling, where you want to be at the top of your weight class to hold the most advantage in a competition. Aidan and Aaron make sure to take note of their weight to maintain their class.

"Most people think that if you gain more weight, you're going to lift heavier, but for me, it's really not like that at all," Aidan stated.

While the brothers plan to compete in the same weight class, they will be competing in two different categories called Raw-Modern and Raw-Classical. The difference in these categories is based off of equipment usage. In Raw-Modern, competitors may use knee sleeves or knee wraps, while in Raw-Classical competitors are not permitted to use any form of supportive equipment other than a belt.

Even in their first meet, the brothers have high expectations for their performance. Aaron hopes to beat the state record for the deadlift, and Aidan hopes to beat the state record for the squat. Overall, Aidan and Aaron are striving to place their names next to their older brother Austin, who holds the Pennsylvania classic bench record in his weight-class, on the state record list. For now, the brothers are focused on getting themselves ready in every aspect for the day they've been so long preparing for.

Aidan and Aaron plan to continue powerlifting for a while. In fact, both of brothers are committed to the University of Pittsburgh. Pitt is one of the few colleges that offers a powerlifting club, and the brothers plan to join the team. In addition, Aidan and Aaron have considered a future in Power-building, a cross over between powerlifting and body building. Austin, their older brother, trains for power-building.

While the brothers can already lift respectable numbers at their age and weight class, their journey has only just begun with their first meet approaching quickly. With individual drives on top of a brotherly support system, it is clear that Aidan and Aaron are ready to leave their mark in the sport of powerlifting.

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Young Engineers Program

By: Finn Cuning

One of Norwin High School's most creative and involved classes is a CHS course titled the Young Engineers Program. The Young Engineers Program teaches students the key fundamentals of engineering, along with preparing them for future careers. The course is taught by Mr. Robert Shuber, and primarily focuses on lessons outside of a classroom at Kennemetal, a machinery manufacturing company who has corporate offices and a technology center in Latrobe. The Westmoreland County-based manufacturer was instrumental in getting this class adopted into Norwin High School's curriculum in order to create opportunities in technical education for students.

The course is exclusively a first-term class, with many students grades 11-12 electing to take it this past semester. Primarily, these students are interested in future careers in engineering and manufacturing, but there are some who take the class simply for the diverse experience. The class strives to be as hands-on as possible, with many students gaining valuable skills while being in close contact with real-world professionals. Students of the Young Engineers program participate in factory tours, witness detailed demonstrations, and listen to lectures from professional engineers in order to build



Young Engineers Program students and administrators pose for a photo.

their knowledge.

"I like that the class gets to travel to the corporate offices and Technology Center in Latrobe," Robert Shuber said. "While onsite, the students engage into immersive experiences with professional engineers."

Students go on field trips to Kennemetal's facility in Latrobe three times for eight separate three hour sessions. Students are responsible for finding their own transportation to and from the facility, meaning that those interested in taking the class must have a flexible schedule and reliable transportation.

"I think what sparked my interest [in the course] was the fact that the Young Engineers course has an extremely different dynamic than any class I've had the opportunity of taking in the past, considering how hands-on the activities were," senior Selah Corbett said.

With scheduling opening in the coming months for all students, the Young Engineers Program stands out as one of the most unique programs and courses in the school. 11th and 12th grade students at Norwin High School are highly encouraged to take the course if they are pursuing a career in technology, manufacturing, or engineering.

CHS Principles of Biomedical Science

By: Garrett Henning and Kaden Markovich

Students in CHS Principles of Biomedical Science walked into class on August 28 to see an unusual sight: a dead body! Well...kind of. While the corpse was not real, the students were expected to take on the role of a legitimate crime scene investigator to figure out what happened to the "victim."

Taught by Mrs. Julia Woitkowiak and Mrs. Jennifer Showman, CHS Principles of Biomedical Science offers students foundational information about the medical field and teaches students skills dealing with biology, anatomy, and physiology.

"Throughout the course of the year, students gather and analyze evidence from a 'crime scene', care for 'patients' in a family medical practice, and track down the source of an 'outbreak' at a hospital," Showman said. "Career exploration is an integral part of the course."

For the entire first semester of the class, students are challenged to investigate a crime scene. They conduct blood tests, DNA tests, and use investigation skills to eventually come to a conclusion about what exactly happened.



Students in Principles of Biomedical Science simulate a CSI scene while incorporating their investigative and scientific gathering skills.

"We're currently investigating the death of a (fake) college student, Anna Garcia," said senior Principles of Biomedical Science student Finn Lauritzen. "We are figuring out how and why she died by collecting evidence from the scene and doing group investigations."

The Anna Garcia project, while extremely fun for the students, is incredibly educational and teaches vital skills necessary for the forensics field.

"They are currently learning how to properly collect, document, store, and secure evidence," said Showman. "They must work as investigative teams to efficiently plan and implement each task."

Students who take Principles of Biomedical Science leave with a basic understanding of what it is like working in the medical field. Later in the year, students will learn about the spreading of disease, patient records, cancer, and even more.

"I am looking forward to figuring out in the end what happened to Anna and learning more about crime scenes!" junior Gabriella Howley said.

Fashion Strategies and Design I

By: Quintin Maizer

Felt, thread, stitching, and sewing: throughout October and November, Fashion Strategy & Design I students utilize these tools and strategies as they design and create their very own line of novelty items. The project gives students a hands-on experience with hand-stitching and designing as they work to create a collection of three different yet cohesive items.

Earlier in the year, before starting the project, Mrs. Greene taught the class the principles and elements of design such as line, color, and shape. Students were then asked to use these components in technical sketches of their design.

The technical sketches, which students were given creative freedom with, were required to be to-scale and no bigger than 6"x6" and had to include three different types of hand stitches that they planned to use.

Once students had their technical designs for all three pieces of their line completed, they then had to pick out their materials: felt, thread, and buttons or lace (if needed). After careful instruction from Mrs. Greene, students then cut out the pieces of felt needed for their designs using different tools such as a rotary cutter which they had also learned about in the weeks prior. For many students, this was their first time using any of these tools.

The last thing that students had to learn before sewing their projects was how to do different hand stitches. Mrs. Greene taught the class how to successfully thread a needle and begin the stitches on a piece of paper. Students learned basic stitches such as



Teya Craycraft holds up her design sketch for her novelty project line.

the back stitch, running stitch, stem stitch, and blanket stitch.

"I personally really liked the sewing," said freshman Jade Peters. "I find it relaxing."

While learning these stitches was important for students in order to complete their projects, it's also an important life skill that students can use outside the classroom, too.

"Hand sewing can be used to repair and up-cycle clothing to extend the life of one's wardrobe," said Mrs. Greene. She also added that hand sewing could be used for embroidery as well.

Having learned the basic stitches, students were ready to begin sewing together their novelty line and apply all the knowledge and skills that they had learned so far this semester. Since this was many students' first time sewing in the class, there were certain aspects that were challenging for them.

In addition to acquiring new skills and knowledge, students also said that they enjoyed how fun the project was and how they had the freedom to choose their own design for their novelty line.

"[I chose my design] because strawberries are cute," said Peters. The "cohesive factor" of her line, as required by the project rubric, is that all three of her novelty items are strawberries. Other students in the class made lines that consisted of things like hearts, animals, pumpkins, and flowers.

Students will continue to work on their novelty line throughout the rest of the semester.

Video Production I

By: Liam Murphy

There are many elements to filmmaking and editing that are mystifying to most. You may wonder "How was that scene edited?", "Why did the director choose to use that shot composition?", "How was the sound edited?", "How was the music added?", etc. In our Video Production I class, students get a peak behind the curtain at how video production truly works.

Video Production I is a class taught by Mrs. Susan Spadaro, who has taught the class for 23 years. The class focuses on filming and editing videos, and can be taken by any grade level. In a typical class period, the students work in small groups to film or edit different projects, such as creating a commercial or a "How-to" video, as well as learning the editing and filming techniques required to complete the project. The class is designed to teach the students the basics of video editing with Adobe Premiere Pro, a well-known video editing application, and filming with a camcorder, in order to plant the seeds for students who may be interested in pursuing filmmaking, editing, and video production in the future.

"My favorite part of teaching video production is seeing students from all grade levels work together throughout the entire process," said Spadaro. "From writing scripts and creating storyboards to editing the final video, it's rewarding to watch their collaboration come to life."

The Video Production I students worked on the "How-to" video project where students film a step-by-step description of how to do a specific task. Senior Ted Kukic and Junior Maddy Bulger created a video teaching the viewer how to solder, while Seniors



Ted Kukic (12) and Maddy Bulger (11) film a How to Solder video.

Corey Ryan and Kailin Tolson produced an imaginative and more lighthearted video on how to time travel with a flux capacitor.

"The focus for our project was sort of a creative little idea I got, and it was more of a collaborative project between me and my partner," said Ryan. "We decided that it would be a great way to dis-

play our creativity for our project, and we thought of a fun way to achieve that creativity by demonstrating a how-to on how to go back in time with a flux capacitor."

"One of my favorite projects in video class is the one where students research a scene and then recreate it shot by shot," said Spadaro. "We focus on matching the camera composition, tracking, and even attempt to replicate the acting of the main characters as closely as possible."

Mrs. Spadaro also teaches Video Production 2, as well as Graphics Design 1 and 2.

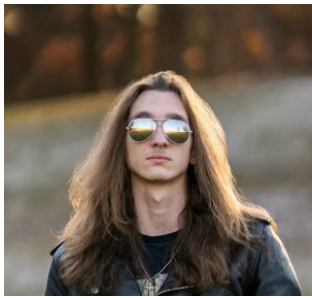
"Taking a video production class in high school is important because it teaches students valuable skills like communication, creativity, and technology," said Spadaro. "With video content everywhere, knowing how to make and edit videos helps students in many areas, whether for personal projects or future careers. The class also encourages teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking as students work together to create their projects."

Video Production I gives students a taste of what could become a hobby or even a career for them in the future, and students who would like to sign up to take the class in a future year of high school should sign up for it through Skyward or their guidance counselor when the time comes.

Meet the Artist

By: Addison Baer

Daniel Matta, guitarist



Q: Tell us about your journey as a musician. When did you start playing guitar, and what inspired you to do so?

A: I have been playing guitar for a little over three years now. When I was at my old school during freshman year, I saw my friend jamming with some kids who had brought in their instruments. As soon as I heard him start playing, I was immediately in awe. Seeing my friend play the guitar in front of these people really inspired me to pick up a guitar and learn how to play it. My journey of learning guitar has basically just been me sitting in my room for hours practicing one song over and over again. However, I now feel like I have taken a new step in my journey with my winning performance of Norwin's Got Talent, and hope to do more performances in the future.

Q: Who are your biggest musical influences, and how do they shape your style?

A: I am always looking at different guitar players, taking certain things from their style, and adding it to my own playing. These players are always changing, but the ones who have been the most influential

to me are: Kirk Hammett from Metallica, David Gilmour from Pink Floyd, Synyster Gates from Avenged Sevenfold, and John Mayer. I have been obsessed with each of these players at some point throughout my playing journey, and they all do things in their musical style that peak my interests.

Q: What made you want to participate in Norwin's Got Talent, and what did you hope to achieve?

A: More than anything I just wanted to show people that I could play guitar. Of course winning is nice, but I went in with the mindset that I wasn't going to win, but that I was just performing for the love of the instrument. Playing guitar is something I have spent hours upon hours getting better at, and all I wanted to do was share with people what I had worked so hard on. I also wanted to step outside of my comfort zone. Performing in front of a big audience isn't something you get the chance to do very often, and it's good to practice now so it's not so rough when you're performing for thousands of people all the time.

Q: Where do you see this taking you in the future? Are there any particular goals you're working toward?

A: My one and only goal is to become a famous musician, who writes original music, and tours the world playing in sold out stadiums. Of course this is one massive goal, but I am prepared to achieve it no matter what.

Parker Wills, composer



Q: Tell us about your journey as a composer. When did you start writing music, and what inspired you to do so?

A: My composition career started when I was about

10. The specific day was when it was my mom's birthday, so I wanted to surprise her. I came up with a small melody and a piano accompaniment for me to sing to her. I practiced this for a while, but when it came to perform the song for her, I got too nervous. I had written the notes on a small piece of paper, which I had stashed away in my closet. The song never got out to her, but it sparked an interest in me. Eventually this got me into improvising songs on my clarinet, and I believe that the small song is what pushed me to become a composer.

Q: How would you describe your composing style? Is there anything or anyone you draw inspiration from?

A: My composing style is very reflective of my interest in pop music. I have composed

mostly small ensemble pieces, as well as some duets. These smaller pieces are all non lyrical and are made with a wide variety of genres. For example I am currently working on a jazz piece for one of my larger projects. No matter what the piece is though, I find a lot of interest in dissonance. I find this feeling a lot in 80's-90's pop music, specifically ELO. The usage of minor dominant/subdominant chords is where I usually lean towards, but putting what seems like a wrong note in the right.

Q: Is there a particular piece/performance that you are particularly proud of? If so, tell us more about it.

A: My piece, "Abscondita Valle" is my current proudest work, as it was used for my AP Music Theory final. It is more or less likely not appealing to the public as it was made specifically for that class, which had a long list of rules. I am extremely proud of it though because it was the first project I finalized. My folders on my computer are filled to the brim with unfinished ideas, some being about 2 years old, and a lot of my projects end up forgotten. This is an amazing process though as all of these mini ideas I come up with are mistakes that guided me into the right answer. All 49 of my prior projects, and counting, help me with this small piece that I am very proud of. I did not have as much freedom, yet I am still proud.

Meet the Artist: AP Art

By: Addison Baer

Baylee Webber



Q: What is your concentration and why did you choose it?

A: My concentration for AP Studio is "my con-

nection with nature as I grow up." I had originally wanted to concentrate on the freedom of nature, however I wanted to do something more personal. Nature is such a large part of who I am and to explore that concept in paintings is a unique experience that not very many people endure. As a kid I was always playing outside and I fully believe that that is where my creativity stems from.

Q: How does your art reflect who you are or what you care about?

A: I always center my art around either a specific thing that has happened to me or something I just generally love. Sometimes my projects may not make sense in how they could possibly connect to my life but that's what I love about it. I get to include small details that nobody else will understand and it's like a window into my mind.

Q: Why did you decide to take AP studio art, and how has it shaped your creative process so far?

A: Ever since Drawing and Painting 1 with Mrs. Satterfield my freshman year I fell in love with learning new materials and creating realistic projects, which I was never able to do before. Then when I found out that there was an AP level art class I was excited for my senior year. Finally being able to put this class on my schedule was almost full fueling with how much I anticipated it. Compared to the only 3 projects per semester in Drawing and Painting

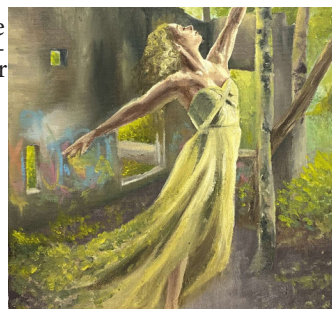
per semester in Drawing and Painting, I had to come up with a completely original idea and do about 8 projects per semester has really pushed me. It has pushed me to try and think outside the box on the thumbnail sketches and always seeing what I like more when I add or take away certain things. We need to create three thumbnail sketches to plan for each new project and I think it's so interesting how I almost never go with my original idea. Looking at the same project idea but in different ways has really changed how I think about coming up with projects.

Q: What is one thing you hope to accomplish before the school year ends?

A: Before the school year ends I hope to create at least one photo realistic project. It is hard to do a style like that within only 10 days, but I think with the proper planning and a good reference photo, I can be confident enough to get something like that done before the end of the year.

Q: Any additional thoughts or comments...

A: One of my favorite things about the class is being around so many other students that have the same passion and love as you. Even when we are all burned out on the rapid pace of the class, we inspire each other to continue to be ambitious in our projects and to get out of our comfort zones with new mediums and styles.



Talyn McClaffety



Q: What is your concentration and why did you choose it?

A: My concentration is "dealing with fear of the unknown." Going into senior year there's a lot of doubts about what will come after high school, and with

most of my friends graduating the year before me I really had no idea what to expect for the next couple years of my life and that scared me. Instead of just focusing on exclusively the fear itself, I wanted instead to focus on ways to overcome that kind of feeling.

Q: How does your art reflect who you are or what you care about?

A: Because of the nature of my concentration, I think every piece is both deeply personal and sometimes hard to understand how it fits together without explanation. I think my pieces throughout the year are a reflection of what I've been dealing with, and my outlook on life and the future.

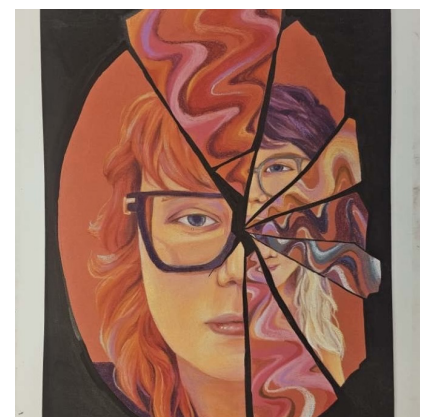
Q: Why did you decide to take AP studio art, and how has it shaped your creative process so far?

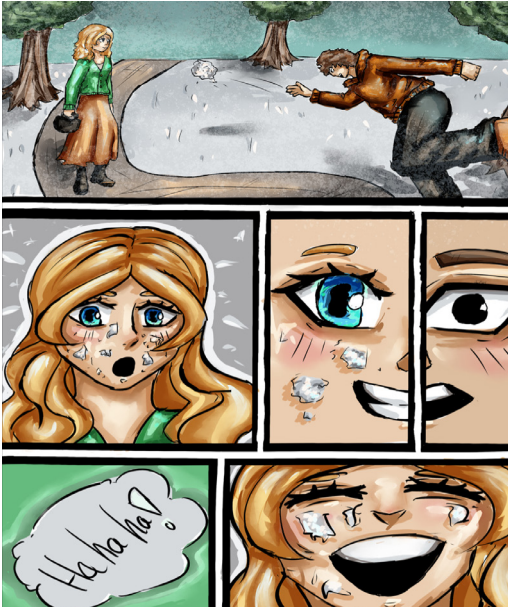
A: I had heard of the class my freshman year through taking Drawing and Painting, but it took until one of my graduating friends in my senior year took it that convinced me it was what I wanted to do. I loved the idea of having a whole class

dedicated to making my own personal art, and being in an environment that not only pushed me to explore creative boundaries, but also forced me to work on a more consistent schedule. I've struggled for years to find time to make art consistently, especially art for myself, so having a class that forces me to carve out that time has been really beneficial for me.

Q: What is one thing you hope to accomplish before the school year ends?

A: While I would obviously love to get a 5 on the AP portfolio, I'm more interested in just measuring my personal growth. This is my first time exploring things that are this personal to me through art since probably middle school, I want to be able to look back at the end of the year and see not only my technical skills improve, but also see my personal growth as I get through my last year of high school and have to face what's going to come after.





Comic by Elizabeth Petteway

Word list:
Romance
Valentine
Crush
Chocolate
Gifts
Love
Dinner
Candy
Hearts
Flowers
Roses
Dates
Respect



Artwork by Elizabeth Petteway

Valentine's Word Search

T	N	N	E	N	I	T	N	E	L	A	V	C	H	D
J	E	R	J	F	O	Q	Q	P	A	R	W	H	T	I
G	A	A	U	S	K	S	D	J	D	M	I	O	C	N
I	H	J	K	S	E	E	L	X	Z	S	X	C	E	N
F	T	Z	I	S	D	A	T	E	S	G	H	O	P	E
T	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	W	N	E	T	L	S	R
S	A	P	K	O	T	S	W	E	A	C	C	A	E	V
D	W	K	E	H	W	P	O	R	J	R	O	T	R	U
T	L	B	K	C	X	H	T	R	U	J	C	E	Y	Y
F	T	O	K	D	N	S	I	S	L	D	R	D	T	I
U	X	W	X	H	F	A	H	N	K	Z	N	C	N	R
Q	F	D	U	T	S	H	M	Z	P	A	B	C	Q	G
Z	E	F	P	O	Y	Z	S	O	C	Q	Q	C	M	X
P	N	P	H	M	V	S	U	S	R	N	Y	N	X	B
Y	A	S	I	L	O	V	E	B	U	I	I	O	G	T

Word search by Mackenzie Schock



Artwork by alumus Maria Spada

Norwin Campus Photos of the Week



Dancing the 'knight' away at Snoball '24

By: Quintin Maizer

Photos courtesy of Norwin Yearbook & LifeTouch



Ahead of the eagerly awaited winter break and the upcoming holiday, Norwin had their annual 'Snoball' dance at Stratigos Banquet Center on the night of Saturday, December 21.

The dance, a crucial part of the winter season for much of Norwin, was organized by the school's National Honor Society (NHS). The club was mainly in charge of ticket sales and guest forms which ultimately contributed to a successful and stress-free dance.

The NHS didn't do all the work, however. The festive decorations, for instance, were provided and set up by Stratigos and were the first thing that attendees saw upon arriving at the dance. In traditional Christmas spirit, the venue featured Christmas trees, golden lights, and many other festive additions.

In addition to these decorations, Stratigos also provided dinner, deserts, and refreshments for all attendees to enjoy upon their arrival at the dance.

While eating at their respective tables, students had the opportunity to vote for Snoball King and Queen using the QR codes posted at their tables. After votes were counted, Kyla Coyne and Colin Bruno were crowned as Queen and King respectively on the dance floor later that night.

Neither Bruno nor Coyne expected to win their place as Snoball royalty.

"I didn't even know I would be voted onto the court until it was announced. I guess my friends voted me into the court," Bruno said. He added that on the day of the dance he and Coyne had pro-

moted each other to the whole school, resulting in their win.

"I was so nervous when king and queen started getting announced at the dance," Coyne explained, also noting that she had never run for the court of any dances before. "When I heard my name, I was just really happy and a little bit shocked that I won!"

Snoball also featured one special guest that students could meet and take selfies with: Santa Claus! The jolly staple of Christmas made his appearance at the dance shortly after dinner and desert and was met with a long line of attendees looking to get a festive picture with him.

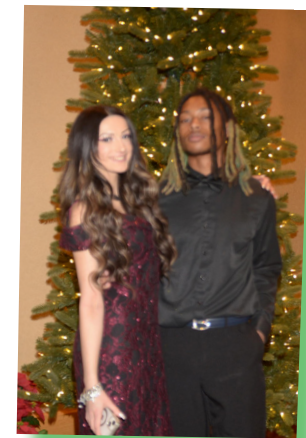
The visit from Santa Claus was a really nice surprise," Mr. Paul Amic, the advisor of National Honors Society said. "It was really fun to see all the students take pictures with him."

The Santa visit was only one of many other fun activities at the dance with more to follow as the night progressed.

Once well-fed and in a festive mood following Saint Nick's visit, the Snoball dance floor came to life with both pop songs and slow songs for students to enjoy and even sing along with as they danced the rest of the night away with their fellow peers.

It goes without saying that Snoball was a fun and joyful night for all students who attended and the overall event was an exciting way to kick off the impending winter break.

"I really had so much fun with my friends at the dance this year" senior Keira Lepley stated.



2024-25 Snoball King & Queen
Kyla Coyne & Colin Bruno.

The death of children's programming

By: Garrett Henning



Revered by many as the best children's cartoon of all time, *SpongeBob SquarePants* continues to air on Nickelodeon where it has dominated since 1999. However, ratings since the conclusion of season three have been consistently underperforming, but why is that?

In fact, on Watch Mojo's list of the "Top 10 Most Watched Kids Shows Of All Time," every single one aired before the year 2016. Every single show...except for *Bluey*.

Every generation is subject to bias due to nostalgia. People who grew up in the 90s tend to praise the culture from that decade as the best. The same can be said about the 80s, the 70s, and the 2000s, but has children's television truly gotten worse? Have we as a society allowed nostalgia to cloud our judgement of present day media?

Short answer: yes, it has gotten worse... kind of. Viewership amongst children's programming has gone down significantly over the last decade, and the biggest reason for this is the switch to a more 3D, com-

puter generated cartoon style. The earliest example I can think of for ugly CGI cartoons is *Sid the Science Kid*. Other notable low points are, but are not limited to: *It's a SpongeBob Christmas* and the *Rugrats* reboot.

No wonder viewership has gone down. Who would want to look at this 3D garbage?

Was this just a stylistic choice because some executive liked 3D better than 2D? No! Funny enough, this style of animation is a lot cheaper than its 2D counterpart. Animation went on a downhill spiral. As viewership decreased, networks were forced to revert to a cheaper option of production, causing viewership to decrease even more.

The reason viewership decreased in the first place was because of a change in culture. As today's children grow up in a world with many options for entertainment, parents are given many options as to what they want to expose their children to.

In an age of screens, many parents are utilizing apps such as YouTube to entertain and educate their children. According to the Pew Research Center, "89% of parents of a child age 5 to 11 say their child watches videos on YouTube, as do 81% of those who have a child age 3 to 4 and 57% of those who have [a] child age 2 or younger."

This shift in what kids are watching has had a massive effect on viewership. Especially with the popularity of streaming services like Netflix and Disney+, children have a lot more access to whatever they

want to watch. It's not surprising that when they can choose from a large catalog of shows and movies, it's going to be superior to whatever Nickelodeon is airing at that moment on cable.

“ The Achilles' heel of children's programming has definitely been their inability to adapt to change.”

— Garrett Henning

The Achilles' heel of children's programming has definitely been their inability to adapt to change. Back before streaming, kids were tied to the TV schedule. Whatever was on was what they watched. The entire gimmick of "Saturday Morning Cartoons" was that you didn't have a clue what would be on, but you were going to watch it because chances were it was going to be entertaining.

While children's programming has definitely taken a blow in recent years, there is a silver lining in *Bluey*.

Bluey is an Australian cartoon that has blown up in recent history as a powerhouse in children's programming. It follows a family of dogs, and each episode handles a topic that can be as light hearted as Dad

dropping *Bluey* and *Bingo* off at school. However, many episodes have been glorified because of their heavy symbolism and underlying themes.

Bluey has become so successful that many of its viewers are actually adults. There's a *Bluey* movie coming out, and I would not be shocked to see a grown man in the theater sitting a few rows in front of a party of 5 year olds. If the makers of *Bluey* continue to do their thing and maybe even expand to other shows and projects, the future of children's programming may be promising.

All in all, the majority of children's programming is way worse now than it was in previous decades. It seems the creators have given up on quality because of their drop in viewership. As we continue towards a world dominated by streaming, I'm curious to see if we ever have another golden age of children's shows.

With Cartoon Network announcing their website's closure, will we be seeing any other early 2000s pioneers of the industry doing the same thing? Are we finally seeing the end of a long-running nostalgia-driven domination of television?

Who knows?

The only thing we as viewers can do is watch what unfolds.

Why your truth doesn't have to be mine

By: Addison Baer



For me, it's the matter of broccoli. I've never liked it. Ever since I was a kid, the grassy vegetable has been my enemy. I used to push it around my plate at dinner, pretending to bite it or sneakily dropping it under the table for my dog to eat.

However, my mom has always loved it. This stark difference in our tastes, something as seemingly simple as food, can actually be about a much broader philosophical phenomenon. We often assume that our feelings, beliefs, and opinions are the only correct ones. But the truth is, just as I can't force myself to like broccoli like my mom does, we can't always expect others to follow the same moral compass as we do. What one person may value deeply, the next may dismiss or even find repulsive.

This idea is the entire being of moral relativism. Under this idea, there is not one thing that is "right" or "wrong," just as there is no single answer to what makes food enjoyable. When we apply this idea beyond food, the philosophy invites us to embrace a deeper level of understanding and empathy for others. It asks us to recognize that our moral judgments may not be the fi-

nal word on what is correct or moral, and that others are entitled to their own truths. The principle can apply to ethics, politics, and our sense of justice- different people, shaped by different experiences, can have different ideas of what is truly right.

Admittedly, this is not to say that moral relativism implies that all values are equally valid in every situation. It is not an excuse to justify harmful behavior or ignore basic human rights, but it is a call for greater humility. We may all bring our own perspectives to the table. While we may disagree on important issues, our differences don't make one side necessarily better than another. In this sense, moral relativism asks us to step outside of ourselves and listen to others. It asks us to understand that our own opinion is just one among many, and that no one person is above another in the vast human experience. Our differences are what make us unique. They don't make us better or worse, they just reflect on the diversity of life.

In the end, perhaps the greatest lesson we can learn from this philosophy is

that it isn't just about the things we disagree on- it's about how we respond to those disagreements. Just as I can respect my mom's love for broccoli even though I don't share it, we can all benefit from learning to respect our differences. When we do, we open ourselves up to a world of diverse perspectives, all of which hold their own value.

And while I'll probably never learn to enjoy broccoli, I can at least acknowledge that it's place in my mom's life is meaningful- and maybe, that's something worth respecting.

“ And while I'll probably never learn to enjoy broccoli, I can at least acknowledge that it's place in my mom's life is meaningful- and maybe, that's something worth respecting.”

— Addison Baer

Knight Krier

Norwin High School

251 McMahon Drive

North Huntingdon, PA 15642

The Norwin School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or handicap in the administration of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to employment. Inquiries should be directed to the Director of Personnel, 281 McMahon Drive, North Huntingdon, Pa. 15642, Telephone Number (724) 861-3000.

Editors: Theo Summers and Grace Fleckenstein (news)
Addison Baer (entertainment)
Joseph Cramer (sports)

NOTICE: Letters to the Editor are welcome, but they must be signed and hand-delivered to Mr. Fleckenstein, the journalism advisor. Thank you!

What if the way we see right and wrong isn't universal, but shaped by small, personal details that make us who we are? In a world such as ours, where society likes to constantly divide itself into polarized groups, one perspective can offer a breath of fresh air: moral relativism. This idea, which suggests that moral principles are not inherently universal, but rather shaped by perspective, speaks to our shared humanity. It reminds us that no one person's truth is naturally placed above another's and that sometimes our deepest hatreds can stem from the simplest places.

Tips on applying to college

By: Miya Valecko



As a current senior, I feel that it is only appropriate to reflect on my college application process. I hope that the following advice can help make at least one person's application process a little easier. This is everything I wish somebody had told me before I began applying to colleges.

1. Everyone's experience is not the same

The key thing to remember during this process is that not everyone's experience is the same when applying to college. Some people apply to 5 colleges, some people apply to 10, some will apply to 20+, some will apply to one and commit as soon as they are accepted, and some people won't go to college at all. Everyone faces different challenges and everyone has different successes. Never try to compare your college application experience to others because you are going to continuously ask yourself if you're doing the right thing or making the right decisions. Everyone has a different idea of what their future should look like, and some people have no idea at all what they may want, and both of those circumstances are entirely OKAY!

2. College applications are not the only responsibility you will have

Believe it or not, school actually continues in senior year. You will still have homework, and tests, and assignments, and projects, and speeches, and everything else a teacher could possibly assign. Odds are, you will also probably have other responsibilities on top of your school work, like a job, a sport, a club, and so on. Most importantly, your social life! Unfortunately, you will be expected to maintain all of your responsibilities while also completing college applications. The most important skill to have, or at least to work on, is time management. You have to be able to learn how to balance this type of schedule. It is going to be stressful, but if you handle your time appropriately, you will make it through. Most importantly, don't forget to balance your time. Make sure to still maintain activity and attend social events to release your mind from the stress. Read a book, take a walk, play a video game, do anything to keep yourself sane.

3. The work never ends... like ever.

The college application process is like starting a fire that never goes out. There will inevitably be more that you have to do, always. Prepare yourself for the long road because as soon as you think you're done with your application, you're not. Almost every application platform, especially the common app, has tab after tab of questions you will never realize have been waiting for you the whole time. It takes a while, especially if you plan on applying to more than

one school. Then, once you finally submit your application, after paying an absurd application fee, just prepare yourself. You will get never ending emails. One of those emails will be asking you to create your portal account to your school to view your application status. Once you log into your portal, you'll most likely end up seeing that your missing some of the materials your college wants from you. That's only really the application part itself. Once you decide to commit to a college, that a whole new world, but let's not overwhelm you with that too. All I can say about this part is to buckle in, baby. You're in for it.

4. Start asking yourself what will make YOU happy.

College application season is like a never ending interrogation. It's the season of unwanted opinions. For some reason, everyone will start telling you what they think or what they believe you should do, as if you've asked. Don't listen to them. Remember what I said? Everyone's college application process is different. Well, everyone who is giving you their opinion is also different. Of course your parent or family members are going to want you to stay in state because they want you to be close to them and of course your best friend is going to want to drag you to the same college they're going to, but their wants and desires do not matter. This is your decision, and it's a big one. You need to ask yourself what is going to make YOU happy or what is going to benefit YOU the most. Opinions are derived from wants and beliefs, and so everyone else's so called "advice" is based off of

what they want, not what you want. Don't forget that.

5. It's okay to not know exactly what to do

So many students get caught up in the process of applying to colleges and forget about the fact that they are actually going to have to make a decision when the time comes. It's startling, and stressful, and exciting, and hectic. And it is OKAY to not know exactly what you want to do. Whether that be deciding where you want to go or what you want to study, it is a big decision you are making, and believe it or not, you're decision is probably going to change. Do not feel like you are the only person who doesn't know what they want to do. It does not mean you are a mess, or that you're unorganized or immature. Honestly, asking a fresh 18 year old what they want to do for the rest of their lives is an unreasonable question, so do not feel like you are dumb for not having the answer.

As I am writing this, I am still a senior who has not decided her future plans yet. As someone who as always tried to control every aspect of her life, this is the piece of advice I am trying to allow myself to listen to: Everything happens for a reason and everyone ends up somewhere for a reason. You can not control the inevitable. You can not see the future. Do not make a decision based on what you think may happen, but what you want to happen. Life is like riding a boat on a stormy sea. You may be able to steer the wheel one way, but the waves are going to take you where they want to take you. It's up to you to decide what your going to do at your end destination.

Checking the status quo

By: Grace Fleckenstein



Looking down at the dark brown chess board—with endless amounts of maneuvers to ponder—I felt perplexed by the world before me. I wanted to understand it, master it, and, most of all, control it.

As I sank into my seat at my school's chess club, the dark, intimidating board in front of me felt more like a battleground than a simple game. The snickers from the boys across the room were the only thoughts I could hear and only piqued my anxiety about being the only girl in my school's chess club. Initially, I was ecstatic to showcase my strategy to my opponents, and I was curious to see if my memorized openings could grant me success. But walking through the doors to find only boys felt like a nightmare... yet it soon became my passion. Each checkmate and draw gave me strength and determination to beat the contemptuous opponent across from me. And soon enough, I did.

So I attended every meeting. Hours of practice against family members, online players on Chess.com, and my friends at the lunch table satisfied my urge to prove

that girls could perform in a male-dominated atmosphere. I perfected my opening strategies and became the only person—among boys—to draw a state champion in a simultaneous exhibition match.

Over time, I began boasting about my accomplishments to my classmates and teachers. But I soon realized I desperately wanted to demystify the stigma of chess being a "boys" game. So, I invited my friends to meetings, enticing them to join even if they were newcomers, ultimately convincing four new girls to join the team. Over the next few weeks, I observed their initial nervousness grow to laughter and excitement.

Inspired by my success, I began to write and publish feminist articles for my school newspaper. Enraged at the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, I felt as if it was my responsibility to empower women to educate them-

selves on the principles behind hidden patriarchal structures in America. I became encapsulated in feminist works—from editorials to novels like "The Awakening" by Kate Chopin—and wanted to prove to myself (and others) that the hidden patriarchy didn't affect my every choice and decision.

From timidly sitting down at a table surrounded by boys to passionately fighting the male-dominated atmosphere across from me, I grew to love fighting for gender equality as a reality—not just as a fantasy. Breaking barriers in male-centered spaces—whether in law, politics, or even chess—is vital towards achieving that very vision. I aspire to further my passion for inclusivity in politics and law in the future, proving that gender does not delineate your pathway in life.

Now, I realize that you cannot com-

pletely control the environment you live in... you can only try. Every decision I have made throughout my school career has been to uplift my status as a prospective woman desperately seeking satisfaction through control of her choices. But you cannot completely control your opponent's moves—whether they decide to move forward or take your pawn cannot always be anticipated...but it can be matched. I know that I do not hold control of the world around me; challenges will always arise, but I am confident that I will be able to check the problems of representation before me in the political landscape.

The change I want to see in the world is unadorned, yet profound: a society where sex does not guide one's potential. From a courtroom to a small classroom, or even to a deep brown chessboard, I believe everyone deserves an equal chance to succeed. In chess, it is well-known that the queen is the most powerful piece. Unlike others, the queen can move in any direction and capture her opponents with ease. However, the queen's power does not stem from being invincible. She is the most powerful because of her strength and versatility. Like the queen, every woman can lead and break barriers in any direction possible. Throughout my journey, I hope to inspire others to take a seat at the table, proving that the queen—on a chessboard and in life—is a force to be reckoned with.

“ The change I want to see in the world is unadorned, yet profound: a society where sex does not guide one's potential.

— Grace Fleckenstein

Athlete Spotlight



Dominic Cerilli
Grade: 12
Sport: Hockey

Are you planning to play your sport in college?
I'm planning on going to the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown for marketing and I also earned a scholarship for golf. I picked Pitt Johnstown because of the golf program and the outstanding business school. Sadly after this season my hockey career is over but, it's been a really fun ride!

Do you have any pre-game superstitions?
I always listen to Suit and Tie by Justin Timberlake.

What do you do to calm your butterflies?
I like to just go out there and have an open mind-set and let the game play out.

What is your favorite sports moment?
Winning the Pens Cup my freshman year holds a special place in my heart because the seniors my freshman year were all like older brothers to me. I've watched those guys play since I was 6 when I first started the Little Knights program.

Who or what inspires you to play your sport?
I was always my brother's biggest fan and wanted to do everything he did so my parents signed me up when I was 3 and the rest is history.



Hanna Klingensmith
Grade: 12
Sport: Swimming

WHAT are your college athletic goals?

I will be swimming for Bucknell in college. I hope that I can place at the Patriot League Championships, and help the team win dual meets throughout the season. I chose Bucknell because they have an amazing business program, and I loved the team when I visited. The campus is beautiful as well.

Do you have any pre-game superstitions? (Music, snacks, habits, etc)

I always like to jump around behind the block and shake out my arms and legs. I also always hit the wedge a few times to make sure it's secure.

What is your favorite sport moment (from your sport)? And Why?

I have so many good memories, but my favorite moment is when my club team won a big meet down in Florida. This is my first season swimming for the high school, but my favorite high school moment is the intrasquad meet over winter break.

Joey Vecchio
Grade: 12
Sport: Ice Hockey



If you ARE planning to play your sport in college, WHERE are you playing? WHY did you choose that program? WHAT are your college athletic goals?

I will play hockey at St. Vincent. One of the main reasons I chose SVC is because of their coaching staff. I've created great relationships with them and I am excited for my future there. Another one is because of the opportunity to play Division 1 club, there are several ways that we can move up to D1 and there is a very high possibility it will happen in my 4 years there. The last reason I was drawn to St. Vincent is the team. They are a great group of guys who work hard and that I am very familiar with. My main goal is to make an impact.

What is your favorite sport moment (from your sport)? And Why?

Winning the Penguins Cup Championship my freshman year. Many of my closest friends were on that team and we were the first team in school history to do so. We celebrated all summer long with that trophy. It felt like our season never ended.

Who or what inspires you to play your sport?

The fact that nothing else matters when I'm on the ice. For the 2 hours that my games go on school doesn't matter, situations don't matter it's just you and your boys against the other team. It's what makes me happiest.

Norwin Hockey's search for success

By: Miya Valecko

Last year, the Knights continued their success and moved up in their section, rising from Class A to Class 2A. Norwin beat Fox Chapel 5-2 in the postseason, but lost to Penn Trafford semi-finals. The team remains in Class 2A for this 2024-25 season.

Despite the team's accomplishments within their last few seasons, the rolling academy has rolled to a stop this season as the team rebuilds and looks to get back on track. This season brought the Knights significant challenges that the team struggled to fight. The team lost key pieces like starting defenders Aaron Varrati and Dom Constantino, main goalie Owen Burmeister, and leading goal scorer and franchise leader Alex Thomas from last season. The absence of most players star players has definitely put a dent in the teams' abilities. With the loss of major contributors last season, it's no surprise that the team has struggled without the support of a confident starting lineup.

On top of a lacking starting line, the Knights have been working to adjust with a new head coach: Denny Zeravica. Zeravica has been assistant coach for the past three years, now taking over from the Knights previous head coach Mike Robinson.

With a loss of significant players and adjusting to a new coaching structure, the Knights unfortunately are off to a tough 0-9 record, making it difficult for them to re-enter the playoff race.

"It's a combination of defense and zone breakdowns," said senior Dominic Cerilli. "Sometimes we just can't get the puck out of the zone. I think it's cost us a few



The Knights (dark blue jerseys) getting ready for the puck drop. (Miya Valecko)

times in close games. We've come into three games now where we've had leads in the third and we just kind of blew them. We blew a two-goal lead against Baldwin which we shouldn't have, but it's just little things like trusting our coaching staff and what they've prepared for us.

Cerilli is a four year player for the Knights and has been a large contributor for the team by getting points on the board. Although the season has been disappointing for him thus far, Cerilli was glad to celebrate scoring his 100th goal as a Knight.

"My 100th goal was special because the pass came from Joey and Mason," said Cerilli. "I try to take Mason under my wing as an upper classman, and Joey is my best friend. I had all of my friends and family there, and some people home from college. After four years of hard work, it felt good seeing everyone with the '100' glasses on."

Joey Vecchio, another four-year player, has some thoughts on this season, too.

"The senior class for the most part have played together for 8 or 9 years," said Vecchio. "We have a lot of chemistry, and we

have that ability to have trust in the guy next to you. That's like our one big advantage. It also comes in handy when we take losses. It helps the morale stay knowing we always have each other to lean on."

A new coach and loss of players is not the only adjustment the team has had to make this year, as many underclassmen have glided onto the ice as starters. Mason Hohman and Cal Constantino, two sophomores, have established their spots in the starting lineup.

"We got to be better as a team," said Hohman. "We give up a lot of goals and we don't really score a lot of goals, so we have to find the net once in a while."

Constantino agreed, adding that the team needs to start putting points up to show their capabilities and succeed throughout the rest of the season. In order to build a better foundation, both of the sophomores agreed that the team needs to prepare the players who will be taking the ice next year and filling the spots of the current seniors.

After some disappointing outcomes from difficult face-offs against Fox Chapel, Penn-Trafford, and Bishop McCort, the team did find some light in their second game against Hempfield by taking home an exciting 6-5 win. A first win for their year and for their season, the Knights were satisfied with their lead after losing to Hempfield 1-8 earlier in the season.

Unfortunately, the team would lose their next few games, putting them out of a spot in playoffs. Regardless of the season's battles, the team celebrated their Senior Knight on Tuesday Jan. 21 at their home rink, Palmer Imaging Ice Arena.

Bocce rolls into the new year

By: Garrett Henning

Norwin's Unified Bocce team began their season on Dec. 17 against Hempfield and played again on Dec. 18 against Mt. Pleasant to celebrate senior night. A ceremony was held before the game to acknowledge seniors Adam Guskiewicz, Travis Roe, and RJ Mahler.

Many students are aware of Norwin's Unified Bocce team, but few are knowledgeable as to how the game works.

"Bocce is a straightforward game that anyone can enjoy!" said Coach Kristin Sweeney. "The goal for each team is to get the most bocce balls closest to the small target ball called the pallina."

Games are played to 16 or until the 30-minute time limit elapses. Whichever team gets their bocce ball closest to the pallina is awarded points based on how many are closest. For example, if Mt Pleasant's ball was 2 feet away from the pallina and Norwin had two balls closer than 2 feet, Norwin would receive 2 points.

"Bocce is such a fun game to coach!" Sweeney said. "The matches are intense and competitive, but the students have a great time!"

Special Olympics Unified Sports has grown to include competition on scales



Knights take a group picture on Senior Night against Mt Pleasant

ranging from local high schools all the way to the global stage. According to the Special Olympics website, the ultimate goal of Unified Sports is to "bring people together."

"Special Olympics is dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences. Unified Sports joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle:

"I love playing with everybody and having fun at practice"

— Chloe Cichowicz

training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding."

Not only does Unified Bocce bring Norwin students together, but it also works with other school districts to create a sense of community, dedicated to enjoying friendly competition while fostering a healthy

atmosphere for inclusion.

"My favorite part about playing bocce is being with people I love and being with my friends!" freshman Makenzie Klipa said.

The Knights' record as of Jan. 31 sits at 9-7. However, winning or losing, the Norwin Unified Bocce team has so much fun when they compete, which can be clearly seen when attending one of their games.

"I really enjoy trying to make the team win and making people happy," said freshman Kaitlyn Cichowicz.

The Knights played their most recent match on Feb. 5 at Franklin Regional.

The schedule for the Bocce's team upcoming games can be found on Norwin's website— admission is free!

Belief on the Court for boys hoops

By: Noah Carney

Norwin Boys Basketball stays alive in the playoff hunt as the season winds down. With high expectations coming off of last season's rebuild and despite losing senior contributors Luke Denny, Alex Wiggins, Dylan McCullough, and Noah Wilson, the boys rely this season on a strong junior class. The Knights starting lineup starts four of those returning sophomores from last year.

The Knights continue to believe in a winning season after finishing last year 8-13 and in section-2-8. At this point in the season the Knights stand at 9-9 and 5-6 in their section, sitting just outside a top 4 finish and WPIAL Playoff birth.

The Knights are also thriving this season with a brand new coaching staff, led by former alumni including head Coach Cam Auld, assistant coaches Gage McCracken and Zach Waszyn, and Greensburg Salem alumnus Coach Jerry Cooley Jr.

Coach Cam Auld and the staff are all about effort, physicality, and belief. Coach Auld gives everything he has to

the team and delivers pure energy every day at practice and the Knights feed off of it. The focus is to give everything you have at all times and 'empty the tank' every day. Physicality is another vital piece in Coach Auld's coaching, and at practice



the Knights are physical and gritty and look to bring that directly into games.

Another key to the Knights is their belief, every day all day the Knights believe and strive to believe more and more in themselves and the rest of their teammates and coaches. This year the Knights are fearless and will take on whoever wants to step on the court at all times.

One thing that is special with the Knights this year does not have to do with their size nor their maturity, but rather their bond. The guys on the Knights' 24-25 roster care about one another like a family member.

The Knights constantly go out to eat with one another or the whole group almost every day or at least a couple of times a week. Whether it is fast food, restaurants, or just someone's house the Knights are always bonding. Some of the team members such as Noah Carney and junior forward Nathan Kuch also have a chicken nugget re-

view channel, where every time they go out to eat and get nuggets, they always make sure to make a review to post to TikTok @norwinbasketballnuggz.

"We have trust in each other that we are going to do our job and we always play with togetherness and it shows how close we are not just as teammates but as friends as well," Graney said.

Norwin relies on players from all grades, with a rotating starting roster including senior Jeffrey Lenart, and juniors Alex Graney, Christopher McKnight, Nathan Kuch, Mario Csukes, Stefano Giannikas, and freshman King Carver and carry in deep rotation with senior-Alex Tyner, Dom Kantz(11), Max Levendowsky(11), Potter Brozeski(10), and Colton Ustakutski(10).

"This is a big year for us as we all have experience under our belts now," said team captain Mario Csukas(11).

"It's been God's gift and blessing to be playing with the group that I am," said senior contributor and leader Alex Tyner. "The work, the sacrifices that it took for us to get here today are beyond any words. This is the closest-knit locker room that I have ever been a part of. We're all pushing each other to where we want to be not only ideally but as a team also. We have spent more time these past 4 months with each other than our own families. We aren't a Christian school but most definitely we are all lead and play in the faith of God. It's truly a special camaraderie and brotherhood we have in this group. I never will take a day for granted with these guys."

“It was a great game after the half, if we start games with the energy we had in the second half, we could be dangerous.”

— Senior-Captain Jeffrey Lenart

Lady Knights basketball builds on past success

By: Addison Baer

The Norwin Lady Knights are proving that their championship run in the 2023-24 season was no fluke, as they continue to bring the same energy in the 2025 season. With a current 7-1 record in their section, and an 11-6 standing overall, they stand firmly at the top of their conference, setting themselves up for another deep run.

Under the leadership of head coach Brian Brozeski, now in his 15th season with assistant coach Joe Oestreich, the Lady Knights are prepared for another WPIAL and PIAA run. They are using last season's WPIAL Class 6A championship win as motivation to push even harder this year.

"This year, the success from last season really motivates us," said senior and captain, Lexi Heller. "It reminds us to 'practice like we've never won a game before.' If we don't practice hard, we won't play hard. If we want that success again, we need to do what we did last season and push ourselves."

All four senior Lady Knights will be continuing their athletic careers in college. Furno (West Virginia Wesleyan), Berger and Brozeski (Clarion) will continue to play on the hardwood while Heller will continue her academic and athletic career at Pitt on the track & field team.

The Lady Knights' chemistry on and off the court has been key to their success, and it's clear that the team's bond is stronger than ever. Seniors Lexi Heller, Berger,



Senior Basketball captains: Bella Furno, Lexi Heller, Averi Brozeski, and Kendall Berger are all playing sports at the next level.



Bella Furno, and Averi Brozeski are leading the way, but this season has also seen rising stars emerge, including junior Ava Christopher, who continues to make a big impact.

Ava's Christopher has really stepped up this season," said Berger. "She's been a crucial part of the team for years, especially with her moving into the point guard role. Even when she was dealing with an injury, she was there for the team. She's such an important piece of what we're doing this season."

Team chemistry has always been a hallmark of the Lady Knights' success, and this season is no exception. Heller emphasized how the team's bond off the court has translated into better on-court performance.

"We've all been playing together since kindergarten, and this year we've become even closer with the juniors," said Heller. "That chemistry allows us to play better together, both on the court and off of it."

The chemistry among the players has always been crucial to the Lady Knight's success, and this season is no exception.

Coach Brozeski, who has taken the

Lady Knights through 14 consecutive seasons, remains confident in the team's ability to compete at a high level.

"The girls are practicing hard, and that's the most important thing right now," Brozeski said. "We're heading in the right direction, but consistency is something we still need to work on. We have some youth and inexperience, and we're still working through that."

On Jan. 30, the Lady Knights took on Mount Lebanon, securing a key win to keep their momentum rolling. With just a few games remaining in section play, the Lady Knights are focused on finishing strong to secure a high playoff standing. As they head toward the final stretch of the regular season winning 7 of 8 games, their focus is firmly on consistency and continuing to build on their strengths.

As the regular season winds down, Norwin is looking to carry its momentum into the playoffs and once again contend for a championship title. The Lady Knights will also continue on to play Hempfield at their senior night tonight at the Castle.

"Don't get too high on the highs and too low on the lows is a mantra we try to carry with us as we wind down the season," said senior guard Kendall Berger.

The Lady Knights look to keep that winning legacy rolling as the playoffs amp up in mid February, and they hope to return to Pitt for another WPIAL Championship.

Athlete Spotlight

Jeff Lenart
Grade: 12
Sport: Basketball

If you ARE planning to play your sport in college, WHERE are you playing? WHY did you choose that program?

I am not planning on playing basketball in college, I am planning to study law at Penn State University



Do you have any pre-game superstitions? (Music, snacks, habits, etc)

I always eat sour candy. I don't think it actually does anything but I got myself to believe it gives me more energy.

What do you do to calm your butterflies?

Slow my breathing down and think of all the fun moments basketball has given me. Also to remember I'm doing this for my team and not so much for me.

What is your favorite sports moment (from your sport)? And Why?

When we recently beat Mt. Lebanon at home in front of our families and school peers.

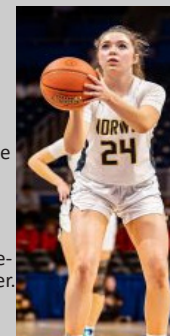
Who or what inspires you to play your sport?

I've always liked watching LeBron growing up, but what kept me playing is the fact that I'm playing with my team and for them as well..

Bella Furno
Grade: 12
Sport: Basketball

If you ARE planning to play your sport in college, WHERE are you playing?

West Virginia Wesleyan. I chose this program because they made me feel at home and were very excited to have me on their team. I hope to get freshman of the year and to develop into an even better player.



Do you have any pre-game superstitions?

I eat pickles before every game and I always need to have my hair done

What do you do to calm your butterflies?

I run up and down the court a few times

What is your favorite sport moment?

When we won the WPIAL championship, because the team we beat which was NA, we lost to them last year in the semis so it was nice to have a comeback season.

Who or what inspires you to play your sport?

My dad

What are one or two things you currently do in your training that are keys to your success?

I always give 100% on every drill, and I start off with my form shooting before every game.

Who is your biggest rival/competition and why?

Upper Saint Clair, they are in our section this year and we lost to them 1 time.

Tyler Turgeon
Grade: 12
Sport: Swimming

If you ARE planning to play your sport in college, WHERE are you playing?

I am committed to Gannon University where I will continue my athletic career. I am majoring in mechanical engineering. I chose Gannon University for the amazing coaches and team, as well as their balance between athletics and academics. I would like to place at the PSAC conference and maybe even qualify for Division 2 NCAA's.



What is the best advice you were ever given?

Focusing on academics and having activities outside of my sport has been good advice. I swim the best when I don't pressure myself so much.

What is the biggest key to your team's success?

We swim better when you support each other and have fun. Swimming is very individualized but the relays are really fun. It's great to see teammates cheering and we celebrate each swimmer's improvements.

Norwin Swim dives into the 2024-2025 season

By: Finnian Cunning

Norwin High School Varsity Swim's season dives head first into the 2024-25 swim season. First-year head coach Katherine Bernardi has her team putting in 110% effort, despite some insuperable issues holding the team back.

The Knight swimmers look to train hard and improve times all season in preparation for Championship Meets later in the season including Westmoreland County Championships and WPIAL Championships at the University of Pittsburgh at the end of February.

Early in the season on December 3rd, both the Boys and Girls teams opened their seasons with a meet in Gateway. The Girls Swim team came just short, losing 90-91, with the Boys Swim team also losing 104-70. In their second match, another away meet in Central Catholic, the girls secured their first win of the season 80-69, while the boys fell to 0-2 with an 87-76 loss. Then, the teams had their first home meet against Elizabeth Forward on Monday, Dec. 16. The boys and girls teams achieved a home victory, with the boys winning 85-79 and the girls winning 92-75.

Both teams have brought light to an issue Norwin's swim program faces when it comes to their chances in meets. The team does not have a diving program, and therefore, automatically forfeits the diving points that other schools earn by having divers present at meets. Additionally, due to lingering issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Norwin swim's feeder program, Norwin Aqua Club, has been struggling with numbers and membership enrollments.



Norwin teams unite at the center of the pool.

These struggles for the Aqua Club have left the team in a rough spot when it comes to recruiting swimmers. Due to these factors, Norwin lacks the same amount of swimmers as their opponents in many of their meets, which leads to the team being at an immediate disadvantage. Coach Bernardi hopes that the team will be able to ignore these roadblocks.

"Our goal is twofold- we're trying to get as many of our swimmers to make WPIAL cuts as we can, and we're trying to make teams nervous," said Bernardi.

Regarding the team's schedule, the Norwin swimmers are over half way through the season and have four more meets remaining before WPIALs. Currently,

“Our goal is twofold- we're trying to get as many of our swimmers to make WPIAL cuts as we can, and we're trying to make teams nervous,”

— Katherine Bernardi



Tyler Turgeon took first in the 100m backstroke.

the Lady Knight Swimmers are 3-3 overall and the Boys Swimmers are 2-4 overall.

As of January 29th, six students have made the time in their event needed to qualify for individual WPIAL competition. These students include: Tyler Turgeon, Aiden Samuels, Liam Samuels, Amber Klingensmith, Hanna Klingensmith, and Kismet Juart. On top of these six students, sophomore Preston Montag achieved a :06 time drop in the WCCA Championship Meet, placing him only 0.16 seconds away from making a WPIAL cut.

On January 25th, both the boys and girls teams traveled to Derry for the Westmoreland County Coaches Association Championships. Both teams performed

well. The Boys finished 5th overall with 232 pts, about 100 pts away from WPIAL powerhouse Franklin Regional. The Girls finished 6th overall with 199.5 pts, while Greater Latrobe won the County Title.

The Boys placed Top 5 in six of their events. Senior standout Tyler Turgeon placed first in the 100-meter backstroke with a time of 51.82.

"We cheer for each other on all of our events," said senior swimmer Tyler Turgeon, "congratulate people no matter how they swim, and we always have fun after the meet. We go out to get food often."

Turgeon is a long-tenured member of the Norwin Swim team, and is one of their yearly top performers, qualifying for WPIAL competition in multiple events last season. Although swimming is technically an individual sport, Norwin's team makes a serious effort to stay as unified as possible.

On the girls side, four swimmers earned individual medals, and sophomore Amber Klingensmith broke the school record time of 57.30, originally set in the 1980's, in the 100-meter fly. Hannah Klingensmith scored 2nd in the 200 meter freestyle with a time of 1:58.35, as well as three additional medal finishes in other individual events.

"Even though we're a fairly small team, I think we have a very, very strong team this year and I think we're gonna see a lot of people getting best times in pretty much everything and do better than we ever have," said Turgeon.

Indoor Track teams racing hot despite cold temps

By: Kaden Markovich & Mike Makay

Norwin's Indoor Track & Field team is up and running. The Knights have been practicing in cold, rain, snow, and even below-zero temperatures. They have been training for their first few upcoming meets at Edinboro University, Akron University, and Youngstown University, and if athletes qualify, Penn State University.

"This winter has been a challenge to train," said Norwin distance coach Brian Fleckenstein. "We haven't had a snow-covered track like this in about 10 years, but the distance athletes and all the athletes have been very committed all winter. In spite of the weather we've had no holdups. I really applaud the effort of the student-athletes to improvise running in parking lots on treadmills on snow-covered roads and everything else and we are going to be ready to rock 'n' roll for our championship meets here in February."

The sprinters have been running, and lifting all winter to become even better than last season after the Boys and Girls both earned team runner-ups at the team WPIAL Team Track & Field Championships at Slippery Rock University. The team is led by head coach Timothy Van Horn, distance coach Brian Fleckenstein and Ray Rakvic, and throws coach Jerrod Galloway. The Knights Winter Track & Field teams practice regularly from Thanksgiving through beginning of Sprint Track in March.

The sprint and jumpers group coached by VanHorn are short sprinters, long sprinters, jumpers, and hurdlers. The boys lost some key senior sprinters, but senior Ryan Schiller is coming off one of the boys most dominant hurdler seasons in Norwin Track and Field history. Senior's Daniel Maddock, and Nicholas Bogner joined Indoor Track this season after a great year running the 100, and 4x100 relay at the state meet last outdoor season. Senior sprinter Eliezer Nicholas is ready to have a good indoor season as well. Jumpers seniors Ryan Schiller, Leo Thomas, Tanner Schneck, and Nicholas Bogner are carrying that load this sea-



(above) Melani Schmidt race to the finish line in 2nd place at Akron Univ. (right) Ryan Schiller, Tyler Beck, and Jeremiah Francis race to the finish in the 60 hurdles.

son for indoor. Coming off a stellar Cross Country season the distance boys are ready to bring their talents back to the track. Seniors Enzo Jiancristoforo, Luke Simpson, Thomas Gaydos, and Mario Breauchy are ready to hit the oval again. Newcomers Alex Barrett, and Benjamin McBride are excited for this first season of indoor as well. Senior Kaden Markovich is returning for his second year of Indoor track.

The hurdle team is one of the best in the state. Led by senior Ryan Schiller, Junior Jeremiah Francis, and sophomore Tyler Beck. Senior Leo Thomas was one of the members on the 4 x Hurdle Shuffle relay at New Balance Outdoor Nationals which they won their heat.

On January 11th, the boys headed to Edinboro for their season opener, eager to get loose and shake off any off-season rust. The following weekend, the boys had a very strong showing, with the distance crew and the sprinters playing a part. Enzo Jiancristoforo ran an indoor PR of 4:35 in the 1600, followed closely by Thomas Gaydos with a 4:38.

The boys' 4x2 relay also had a breakout performance, setting a new school record with a time of 1:32.89 marking a major achievement for the program. On the hur-



dles side, Ryan Schiller ran his times of 8.34 and 8.17 in the 60H making him 6th in PA, and 87th in the USA, hitting the state qualifying standard, which will be a huge confidence booster early in the season. Nicholas ran a strong 51.66 in the 400, showing he's in top form for the upcoming meets.

The next weekend, the team traveled to Edinboro again on the 25th, where Luke Simpson shined in his season opener, running a 4:32.24 to win the mile race, solidifying his spot just where he left off at the PIAA track and field outdoor championships. With each race, the Knight boys are building momentum and preparing for the championship meets ahead in February and March. "The Knights are doing great work this indoor season because it's what we love. The only way to do great work is to love what you do," Ryan Schiller said.

The Lady Knights Track Team is looking very strong going into their long-awaited winter season. The girls team had multiple relays go to the PIAA Championships in the spring, and the girls distance squad recently earned 6th at PIAA for XC in the fall, and 12th at Nike XC Regional Championship in New York state.

The short and long sprint group have some of the best runners in the WPIAL,

such as Dusquene commit Melani Schmidt, senior Autumn Stoken, and rising runners Karina Karadus, and Myla McCabe.

Brandi Brozeski ran a great time in the 60-meter hurdles at the Akron meet, clocking in at 9.35 seconds, for a personal best. Brozeski hit the state qualifying standard for the Indoor PTFCA Championships at Penn State the first weekend of March. Brozeski was the only athlete from Norwin to secure a spot last year at the PTFCA Championship.

At Akron University, Annie Czajkowski has proven herself one of PA's best runners, running a fast 2:22 in the 800 meters and another fast time of 5:11 for the win in the 1600 meters at Akron. Czajkowski, a 3-time state qualifier in cross country is seeded 9th in the state so far this Indoor Season in the 1600m run. Addison Farrah ran an outstanding 12:03 in the 2-mile at Akron, the sophomore has the ability to perform under pressure. Anna Rakovic wasn't far behind with a solid 12:30 in the same event.

In the sprints, Melani Schmidt lit up the track with an impressive 25.66 seconds in the 200-meter dash. The Norwin girls have been excelling in a range of events, from sprints to distance. The team's strong performances at Akron, and Edinboro show how much these student-athletes have been working.

The girls' hurdles are also very strong, led by Brandi Brozeski (Dusquene commit), and Karina Karadus. Brozeski, and Natalie Aquillio are the jumpers for the Lady Knights.

The boys and girls are preparing for the TSTCA Championships Saturday, Feb, 22, and if all goes well, the Knights hope to send some athletes to the PTFCA State Championship Sunday, March 2 at PSU. "This indoor season has shown a lot about our team," said sophomore sprinter Myla McCabe. "It's only January and we are already running great times and people are getting long distances. I am excited to see what the team can do the rest of indoor and then outdoor this year."

Norwin Bowling gets rolling

By: Joe Cramer

Norwin's bowling teams are 'striking' down their competitors on the lanes. After the incredible 2023-2024 season for the girls' and boys' bowling teams, they knew that they had big shoes to fill in terms of success in the season. The Girls' Team finished 10th in the state last year and the Boys had two individual qualifiers for championships as well.

The Girls Bowling team kept the ball rolling from where it stopped last year. Norwin's Girls Bowling team had an amazing run to states last year as a team. While none of the singles got to go to states last year and compete on their own this year that could be up for change.

Dec 4, the Lady Knights had their first match of the year against Thomas Jefferson. Despite having to face a strong TJ team, the Lady Knights took care of business. Nearly all of the girls had notable performances. The leader of this match for the Knights was Gabby Anders who came out with a 226-high game and a 621 series which was a career-high for her. Some of the other great performances came from Kari and Kali Siegel who both bowled games above 200.

"The team this year has a lot of great bowlers and some new people who are doing exceptional," senior Gabby Anders said. "Our depth on this roster is our biggest strength, no doubt."

Most recently the girls had another 7-point shutout performance against Yough. On Dec. 6 the girls came ready to bowl once more and did just that. The Siegel sisters lead the way in this match with Kali having a 641 series, and Kari having a 581 series. Along with them filling out this well-rounded roster came Raeana Bruce who also bowled a very impressive game.

"The key to doing well at this level is consistency and lots of practice," Anders said. "All of our girls practice a lot, and as a team, we have the capacity to make a deep playoff run."

The girls on December 18th bowled their 4th game of the year against Connellsville. The girls dominated the other team taking all seven points for the match. They were



Senior girls bowlers pose for a picture after a big game.

led by Kari Siegel with a strong series of 670.

The Lady Knights on Jan. 4 competed at the Saint Vincent College's 2025 Bearcat Challenge at Hillyview Lanes. Despite facing some difficulty the girls bowled excellently. The team faced some great competition like Plum, and Mifflinburg as well as some others. In the end, the girls came up just short against Plum but still earned themselves second place.

Against Belle Vernon, the girls got back to their regular flow with a dominant 7-0 win. All of the girls bowled exceedingly well, but Kari Siegel and Gabby Anders both bowled incredibly well with series of 640 and 581.

Next up on the chopping block for the girls was Thomas Jefferson again. While not always bowling their best games the girls still outperformed their opponents. None of the girls bowled their best game, but all together the girls bowled the highest single game in 4 years bowling 988 in game three.

The Lady Knights would remain undefeated against Yough. The girls had another dominant game, winning 7-0. Again the girls were led Kali Siegel who bowled a 576 series. This win keeps the girls in their first-place seating for the Section.

On Jan. 22 the girls had an unopposed match. Despite having no competition the girls bowled strongly against themselves. Kali Siegel bowled a new career high of 739. Not just Kali, but Raeana Bruce bowled a 230 game and 608 series, both of which are career highs. This unopposed game was the sight of a new Norwin Girls Bowling record of 1007 and team high season 2851. During the 2023-2024 season, many strong individuals qualified for WPIAL and PIAA.

This season the Norwin Boys Bowling Team tried to start the season with a win against a very strong Thomas Jefferson team but sadly came up short. Despite the loss, many of the strong individual performances inspired hope for the rest of the season. In the TJ match, Hunter Cook led the boys with a 235 high score and a 608 score for the series. The JV boys team also showed some strong skills for the future led by junior Gavin Balcom, who was able to hit a score of 205 for the first time finally joining the 200 club.

"As a team, we really just need to get our scores up a little," senior bowler Hunter Cook said. "Consistency is

key for this sport and as a team, I believe that we could work on that."

The boys didn't lose their footing against Yough and got their game together to win all 7 matches. Again with another great performance, Hunter Cook led the boys with a 241-game high and a 607 series.

"As a team, we practice really hard and try to perfect the little things," Hunter Cook said. "That's probably our biggest strength for the team."

The team's next game on Dec. 18 was against Connellsville. Sadly the boys struggled to get on the board against the tough opponent. The boys didn't get any points, but were close due to game leader Hunter Cook. The boys struggles continued on Jan 8th in their match against Belle Vernon, where the boys suffered another tough loss.

Jan. 10 the boys had their second match against Thomas Jefferson in which they got off to a slow start. The boys sadly were not able to pick up the pace and fell short again against a very strong TJ team.

On Jan. 15, the boys had their 7th match against Yough and were able to turn the tides on their season. The boys held control throughout the entire match. Hunter Cook and Jonah Stashko led the way for the boys on their way to a 7-0 victory. With the win against Yough, the boys are moved to 3-4 on the season and are sitting at 4th in the section.

For the boys' 8th match they bowled unopposed for the win to move their record to 4-4. In the match Senior bowler Jake Sincak led the boys with a 265 game and 697 series, both of which were career highs.

On Jan. 29, the Lady Knights were announced as Southeast Section Champs for the fourth consecutive year. Another milestone has been added for this record team. Next up is Senior Day at Spins Bowl Pittsburgh on Feb. 5.

Norwin Boys Wrestling reach team state meet for the first time; Lady Knight Wrestlers tune up for WPIALS

By: Theo Summers

Norwin Boys Wrestling pinned down success this season advancing to the WPIAL Semifinals for the first time in team history. The Knights also finished with a record of 12-1 overall and 3-1 in their Section, landing them at second in their Section. The team went up from their overall record from last year of 12-7 overall and 4-1 in their Section in 2023-24.

"The team has been working hard in the weight room and on the mats," Coach Kyle Martin said. "We do some intense workouts and put a lot of science into the athletic development process. If the athletes buy in, we will see those results on the mat. If they don't, we won't."

In addition to the WPIAL Team Championships on Feb. 15, the Knight wrestlers have a chance to advance to the PIAA Championships individually at the Section Tournament hosted at Norwin on Feb. 15. The top 6 individuals in each weight class advance to the PIAA Championship Individuals in March at Hershey.

Seniors Gage Mamie and Nick Puskar placed in the WPIAL last season, while sophomore Landon Sidun was runner-up in the WPIAL but went on to place number one in the PIAA State Championship. This season, the team is placed 5th in the WPIAL and 19th in the state, which are both the highest ever for the team.

"This year's team is awesome," Sidun said. "Everybody is friends and it's really fun to be a part of the team. When someone is wrestling, the whole bench is cheering them on, bringing a whole different energy to the match and team as a whole."

Last season, Sidun won a state title in the 114 lbs weight class, earning a gold medal at the PIAA Championships. The team also placed 5th at the WPIAL 3A championships. This season, at 121 lbs, sophomore Landon Sidun won three of the biggest wrestling tournaments in the country this season, obtaining 1st at all three. At Beast



Knights' Honor @Knights_SCRAP · 1d



At Mid-Winter Mayhem, junior Jojo Dollman took 1st, and sophomore Karsyn Champion took 4th. At the Powerade tournament, Dollman, Champion, and sophomore Octavia Walker all finished 3rd place in their weight classes. At the Beast of the East, senior Keiarra Leonard placed 7th, Walker placed 7th, sophomore Avalin Barry placed 6th, and Dollman placed 4th, obtaining a top 15 finish out of 90 teams. These three tournaments are some of the biggest in Girls Wrestling in the east, showing the improvement and strength of the Norwin Lady Knights this season.

The team has gained more members than ever before and is coming together to form a strong group, enjoying each other's company and cheering each other on from the bench. Although the team competes individually exclusively because Norwin still does not have enough members to fill the weight classes, they gain experience and knowledge from one another.

"My favorite part of wrestling is my teammates," junior Lillian Chaney said. "We are all best friends, and it is so much fun watching them. I wouldn't be doing it without them."

This season will conclude with the WPIAL championships on Saturday, Feb. 15 at North Allegheny High School, and possible participation at the PIAA state championships by qualifying in the top individual wrestlers of each weight class. Dollman placed 5th at the PIAA state championships last season and now hopes to become a state champion.

"I am a two-time WPIAL champion and a two-time regional champion," said Dollman. "My goal is to get a third title at the WPIAL and to place in the PIAA state finals."

of the East, Sidun took down the number one kid in the country, Joe Bachmann, in overtime 3-2. At the Powerade Tournament, Sidun won his second Powerade title taking down world champion Paul Kenny. Lastly, at the Doc Buchanan Tournament in Fresno, California, Sidun took 1st once again, winning 5-3 in the finals.

The team is unified this season, with the lower weight classes dominating matches and the team as a whole exhibiting a theme of cohesion. Senior Gage Mamie, at 145 lbs, showcased his leadership throughout the season with multiple wins against rival Canon-McMillan, who the team won against twice this season. The teammates have gotten closer, with strong individuals creating a powerful team.

"My goal is to lead this team to team states," Mamie said. "Connellsville is gonna be tough, but win or lose, we can come out of the next match with a win and make our way to the state championships."

At the WPIAL Team Playoffs, the Knights opened the WPIAL Team Playoffs as the No. 5 seed and defeated both Canon-McMillan, the No. 12 seed, and Bethel Park, the No. 4 seed. The Knights now face the

No. 1 seed, Connellsville at the WPIALS Semifinals at Peters Township on Saturday, Feb. 1. The top three teams in the WPIAL tournament make it to the PIAA team state championship.

Coach Martin X-Post: "I've coached athletes who won National & World Championships, coached PA teams to National Championships. But seeing 4 years building a program & chasing a mission come to life in your athletes will never be matched! Historic night for Norwin!"

Girls:

The Norwin Lady Knights have a record of 5-4 and are heading to the WPIAL championships on February 15. Last year, they finished with a record of 5-4 and junior Jojo Dollman placed 5th at the PIAA state championships.

The team, which became official two years ago, is solidifying and gaining momentum into the season and future seasons. The girls are wrestling with experience now, as well as gaining more wrestlers who can begin and continue to learn from the team and the coaches.

Shredding the Slopes: Norwin students take advantage of winter

By: Joe Cramer

Skiing and Snowboarding are some of the most widely participated in winter sports. Roughly 11.8 million people just in the US ski or snowboard every year. Norwin is no different in that it has tons of students who master the slopes and deserve some spotlight themselves. These students are dedicated to their craft, so much so that they build courses in their own back yards, go to resorts every weekend, or do what they can with the Ski Club. Skiing has always been a popular pastime for Norwin students but this year truly showed that with the frigid temperatures, and the monumental amounts of snow made for a perfect ski season.

Ski Club Vermont:

Jan 9-13 the Norwin Ski Club took their annual big trip to Vermont. While in the green mountain state the students were able to ski and two amazing resorts which



were Stowe and Sugar Bush. While at the resorts students skied and snowboarded for countless hours with friends.

"The mountain conditions were amazing at these two resorts," said Ski Club adviser Jack Momeyer. "While sometimes the mountains were a little icy, the skiing is still amazing."

On the long trip students did more than just ski. They got to tour a Ben & Jerry's ice cream factory, go bowling, and have a pizza night. Not only that at the end of a long day students could choose to relax in the resorts indoor pool at the end of the day. While ski trips like this usually require some more advanced skill, the ski club offers smaller trips if a student is just starting out. For these smaller trips students usually head to Seven Springs. No matter what you choose to do with Ski Club it is almost



guaranteed that you will have a good time with or without friends.

"If you are just starting out skiing make sure to take it slow," said Momeyer. "Skiing can be a fun lifetime sport if you put the time in."

Even though this years Ski Club events have come to a close, next year for the 25-26 season looks just as bright as the last. This coming year the trip on the list will be taking students to Vermont again to Killington and Pico resorts. If you are looking for fun in the snow Ski club is your place to look.

Student Spotlight:

Some students eat, breathe, and sleep on the slopes. Skiers and/or snowboarders like junior Karlie Johnson, and senior Jake Osterberg ski almost every week hitting the slopes two to three times a week. To get to that level of dedication they have been practicing and getting better for a majority of their lives.

"I began skiing around the age of 8. After about 4-5 years of skiing on and off, I realized I enjoyed snowboarding more," said Osterberg. "I have been snowboarding every winter since then."

Skiing and snowboarding for these students is more than just a hobby instead it's ingrained into their lives. It doesn't make up their entire life, but more often than not it gives these students a place to have fun over the winter. Many of these students have a lot going on with school and extra-curriculars, but still find time to pursue their passion in the snow.

"I love skiing because it gives me the opportunity to be outside and in nature while also being active," said Johnson. "Being an athlete, it gives me something to look forward to in the winter."

Many of the Skiers at Norwin's home resort is Seven Springs ski resort. Out of the 33 slopes at Seven Springs some stand out more than others. To like a certain run is more than just if it's challenging or just about the slope itself it can be more than that. For example on the Gunner Lift there is a run called Lost Girl. While the run itself is fun one of the best parts about it is the scenic chairlift ride up to it.

"Skiing is awesome and a great way to meet new people and stay active," said Johnson. "It's also a great way to get into nature."

While Seven Springs is the majority of

peoples home resorts, many people live to venture away from the commonality of the home resort. Snowboarder Jake Osterberg is the prime example of that. He has gone to more local resorts like Seven and Wisp, but he has widened his horizons to an unprecedented scale by going to resorts like Big Sky in Montana, and Copper Mountain in Colorado. Having this long of a skiing resume Osterberg knows the kind of terrain he likes best.

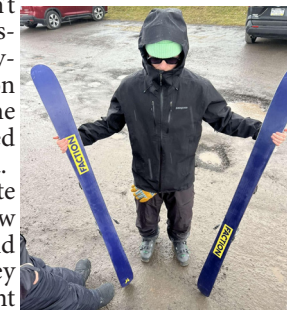
"I love all kinds of terrain- but a good, steep tree run is unmatched. Any run that requires an extra challenge is where I have the most fun," said Osterberg. "I also enjoy storm days especially, as extra snow gives good cushion for progression."

While the resorts and terrain are some of the most important parts of skiing and snowboarding, to many people so is the equipment. Some of the most popular equipment comes from Patagonia, and Arc'teryx. Those brands are more renowned for their clothing like outerwear. Some brands aren't always as accessible to your every day person for example the Vermont based company Skida.

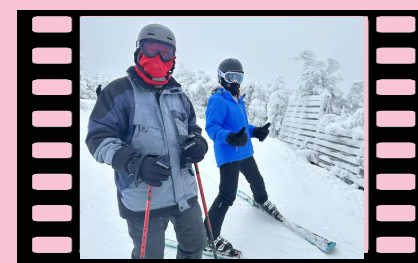
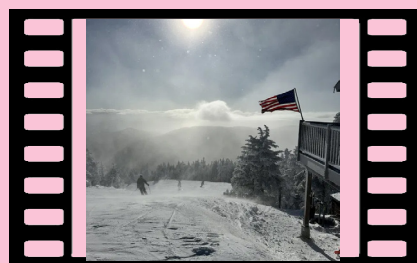
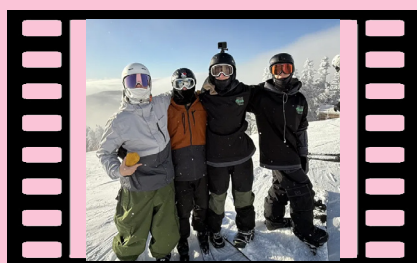
"My favorite brand right now is Skida," said Johnson. "They are a Vermont based brand, and you can pretty much only get it there so it's pretty exciting to get it."

Skiing/Snowboarding is not just an activity for a select group of people. It is a global culture that takes everyone in. People should always try to get out and give it a shot. Skiing could allow you to travel the world, meet new people, have fun with friends and so much more.

"The ski culture is also very welcoming, as everyone can embrace their own unique style on the mountain," said Osterberg. "Get out there one day, start small, and work your way up!"



Senior Jake Osterberg has been skiing whole life



Ski Club Pictures from Stowe, Vermont

