



# Knighly News

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## HOW DOES HOMEWORK AFFECT STUDENTS?

BY THOMAS MILLER

Homework! Every student, junior high through college, is familiar with it. Some like it; the majority hate it. Have you ever thought about what it does? As with most things, there are pros and cons, and it is time-consuming. There are, however, positives to homework.

When you try to think of pros for homework, you probably can't think of many, but there are a lot. One of the benefits of homework is that it teaches students how to set priorities. It also helps students learn time management. By having work and a deadline, students must decide between fun and duty. Another benefit of homework is that it builds discipline. Students have homework almost every day. They need to discipline themselves by consistently doing homework. As you get older, there is usually no adult supervision. Homework also helps students learn the material better by having them work on it more. Overall, homework reinforces learning and retention and helps teachers identify what students understand from the material and what needs to be taught to those who don't.

Homework can cause mental health strain, such as stress, anxiety, and burnout, because it puts constant pressure on the student to get the work done. It also limits time for relaxation, socialization, and spending time with family. Homework reduces time for hobbies, sports, and outdoor activities, which limits well-rounded development. Another possible downside is sleep deprivation caused by late-night homework. This lack of sleep can cause headaches and exhaustion. With all that pressure, there can be a lot of temptation to take shortcuts and cheat using Google and Artificial Intelligence. Homework can also lead to educational inequality, as some students lack a quiet environment, internet access, or support from their parents or relatives. This can lead them to fall behind their classmates. Another thing is that after a while, it gets repetitive, which can kill a student's interest, curiosity, and motivation. Homework can also limit a student's creativity by focusing on repetitive tasks rather than encouraging independent, creative exploration. Ultimately, the heavy burden that homework places on students can take a toll on mental and physical health.

With homework being such a prevalent part of student life, it is important to know how it affects you academically, physically, and mentally, both positively and negatively. Knowing how it affects you can allow you to improve the good and fix the bad. While homework reinforces classroom material, it is also a source of stress and burnout, suggesting that schools should improve work-life balance. Allowing students a chance to breathe instead of flooding them with anxiety-causing mountains of homework would help them stay more engaged in class, learn the material better, and help them maintain relationships and focus in extracurricular activities which would contribute to development. In short, homework is good but only in moderation; issues start to occur.

# BEHIND THE SCENES: IN THE OFFICE WITH MRS. MANN

BY BRYCE HERMANN

Have you wondered what Mrs. Mann does? While she does way more than one article could ever do her justice, this is a small glimpse into Mrs. Mann's life at school. Each day, she takes every phone call from parents and responds to emails. Mrs. Mann also helps out wherever she can, including arranging substitute teachers, helping with before/after care, and even driving the bus. If you are hurt or sick, don't worry! Mrs. Mann will do anything she can to help you. Part of her day-to-day also includes completing paperwork and state reports. She files reports for both campuses. In addition to these reports, have you ever wondered who is behind finalizing all of your field trips? Well, you may have guessed it, but it is Mrs. Mann. She also helps with online registration. Every day, Mrs. Mann leads morning prayer from a prayer book. Each afternoon, prayer is also led by Mrs. Mann. We do the St. Michael the Archangel or Hail Mary prayer. Mrs. Mann has been here since 2009 and says she loves it and is never bored of it!

## MEET OUR GOLD SPONSORS

BY RITA MCLAUGHLIN

Here at Marquette Academy, we are very thankful for our sponsors, especially our Gold sponsors. These sponsors donate at least \$1,000. This money is used not only to contribute to the overall daily life of Marquette Academy students and staff, but also in the classroom, as well as in extracurricular activities. Please help us here at the *Knightly News* sincerely thank the following Gold Sponsors for this 2025-2026 school year.

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# MONSIGNOR HALFACRE'S DEDICATION AND DEVOTION TO FAITH, PARISHES, STUDENTS, AND COMMUNITIES

BY GERARD COOPER



Monsignor Halfacre didn't always know he was going to be a priest. He didn't even know that God was calling him to become a priest until his sophomore year in college. In fact, Monsignor wasn't even Catholic up until his freshman year in college. Monsignor Halfacre never really considered the priesthood until God called him to be a priest. After Monsignor was ordained a priest in 1991. He was given the title Monsignor 15 years later.

Monsignor Halfacre is a big part of the parish of St. Michael in Streator. He's been the pastor at St. Michael's parish since 2011. In addition to being the pastor of the church, he is the pastor of the grade school. He's been there since 2011, also. He is responsible for the parish there. Also being responsible for the grade school. He's been a part of many other parishes in his ministry, like St. Mary's in Utica, St. Patrick's here in Ottawa, and many others too.

Furthermore, Monsignor teaches at Marquette Academy High School. He's been teaching there for 34 years. He teaches religion and philosophy. Monsignor only teaches the seniors. Monsignor feels that he's built good relationships and connections with the students at Marquette. He teaches them using material he has reworked and refined over the years. Monsignor Halfacre takes pride and a sense of accomplishment in his teaching. Monsignor is also a Gold sponsor of Marquette Academy, which means he donates financially to the school in addition to his spiritual guidance.

Monsignor Halfacre is the Vicar General of the Diocese of Peoria. He's been the vicar general since 2011. A vicar general assists the bishop in various ways and has certain responsibilities to the diocese. Some of his responsibilities include overseeing priests, including personnel matters, and addressing concerns within parishes. The vicar general has a duty to make decisions following the interests of the bishop.

Monsignor has been dedicated not only to the priesthood and the church in his time as a priest and then as Monsignor, but also to the communities he serves. Throughout his years in the Diocese, he's made an impact on communities and individuals within them. He's a crucial part of the diocese as the vicar general. Monsignor makes financial contributions to Marquette Academy as a gold sponsor. That helps the administration there to make decisions that benefit students. As mentioned, Monsignor works at Marquette, and he cares deeply about his students and the Marquette community. Monsignor says, "At Marquette, there's a special spirit that makes us who we are."



# FREE TIME IN PREK: WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

BY ANGELICA STAWIARSKI

Have you ever wondered what preschoolers do in their free time? What exactly does this mean? According to research, preschoolers like to run around and do their own thing, using their imaginations to guide them. Additionally, preschoolers (ages 3-5) have short attention spans, so you may see them doing one thing, and the next minute or two, they might be doing something else. Children this age enjoy spending time with their parents. This may look like them trying to get their parents to play with them, or even just being near them, trying to help. One way parents can help preschoolers learn is to play with them. By doing this, you can expose them to the vocabulary and skills needed to do certain things.

## MAKING PARENTS PART OF THE PROGRAM

BY SULLIVAN AUTER



How do the preschool classrooms involve parents while planning activities? Ms. Markey said, "We don't necessarily involve parents in planning, but we do keep them informed through our Instagram accounts, newsletters, and emails." She also stated that they send out sign-up sheets for our various classroom parties for parents to donate if they are interested. When asked to describe a creative craft project that allows children to express themselves rather than just following a template, she said, "Our art center is always open and stocked with materials. There is pipe cleaners, googly eyes, popsicle sticks, yarn, etc, that children can create with on a daily basis."

## HEALTHY HABITS FOR PRESCHOOL

BY LANEY RUDDICK

Research shows that physical health for kids around three to five years old requires a lot of nutrition and hydration. This helps to keep their energy up and stay healthy. Preschoolers have a lot of energy. In a day, they need to get at least sixty minutes of physical activity. Research also states that children around this age and grade should be getting 10-13 hours of sleep each night. At Marquette Academy, we do the best we can to meet these requirements. Preschoolers are given a designated nap time each day, but if they do not nap, the time is given as a quiet time. It is a way to calm down and reset.



# THE IMPACT OF NAP ON PRESCHOOLERS

BY HANNAH SKELLY

Does nap time help children focus? Studies show that afternoon naps can enhance memory and support learning. Many parents believe their child will sleep better at night without a daytime nap; however, if your child is overly tired, their behavior may actually worsen. Children can also become overactive, and that makes it difficult to fall asleep at bedtime. Children 5 and up need time to re-group, as do their parents. This quiet time should be used for:

- Quiet play time
- Looking at books
- Puzzles
- Built with magnetic tiles
- Paint a picture
- Color in a coloring book
- Build a fort
- Play with puppets
- Play “school” with toys
- Build something out of a cardboard boxes
- Make a picture with crayons
- Board games

Research shows this is not a time for TV, videos, or games. This is a beneficial time to help kids regroup and to stay focused.



# FROM SCRIBBLES TO STORIES: THE RISE OF PHONETIC SPELLING IN KINDERGARTEN

BY CAMERON MUCCI

Kindergarten is when students start learning to spell. Mrs. Clausel stated, “[they] started learning to spell around January”. While this is her goal, it really depends on students’ phonemic awareness. Mrs. Clausel goes on to say, “she helps her students spell by sounding words out”. Another strategy she uses is to tell her students a word, then have them write what they hear. By doing this, they break down a word by writing each sound they hear. This works on their phonemic awareness and on how to hold the sounds in a word together. Finally, they play spelling games to make it fun. Mrs. Clausel states that their favorite way to learn is playing Sparkle.



# WHAT’S HAPPENING IN FIRST GRADE?

BY DOMINIC CHERVENY

Mrs. Tamblyn is the first-grade teacher here at Marquette Academy. Mrs. Tamblyn chose to teach because she loves the light-bulb moments students get from time to time. She is deciding to take a break from teaching after this year and focus on family matters. Some skills the students are learning are two-digit addition and subtraction, which they spend a lot of time on. She tries to make learning fun by using videos to help reinforce concepts, having reading buddies that are stuffed animals or people, and sometimes doing arts and crafts, or flashlight reading, where they read in the dark. Mrs. Tamblyn stated that her favorite part of teaching is that “I can help a student understand a concept they didn’t otherwise understand to see that growth.” Mrs. Tamblyn said, “They are also responsive and open to learning new ways.”

# FIRST COMMUNION IS ALMOST HERE

BY MICHAEL MILLER

First Communion is the second sacrament second graders receive. They will receive First Communion on Sunday, May 3rd at 9:00 a.m. Mrs. Miller, the second-grade teacher, states. They have practice on Saturday, May 2nd to go over what to expect and what will happen during their mass on Sunday. This helps answer questions they may have and shows them what they will be doing as they practice walking down the aisle, going into their pews, and walking up to receive communion.

On Sunday, the students are required to follow a dress code. Girls are required to wear a white dress, dress shoes, and a veil. The boys are required to wear a white dress shirt, dark slacks, socks, a tie, and dress shoes. They meet their teachers at the school, line up, and process together as a class over to St. Columba church. Both Marquette Academy and CCD students will receive this sacrament together. This year, there are seven students from Marquette Academy and 20 students from CCD making their First Communion.

During Mass, all the students will sit together so that Monsignor can talk with them during the homily. When it is time for communion, they are the first to receive before the rest of the congregation. At the end of mass, a large group picture is taken of all of the communicants and then they are released to their families for their own pictures.



# YOUNG ARTISTS EXPRESS SCHOOL SPIRIT

BY DANIELA MELENDEZ

The 2026 Annual Catholic School Week featured many new and fun activities, such as the Student Olympics, Pie-a-priest, and the Eighth-Grade Vs. Teacher Volleyball Game. However, in this author's opinion, all of these activities did not really show or express the enthusiasm of school spirit. The Second Annual Yearbook Cover Contest was announced on January 19, informing all the enthusiastic participants, preschool through 8th Grade, of the requirements. While last year's contest had 15 participants, this year's contest had 28 entries and 29 participants. The third-grade class had the most participants of any grade. The participants were Eloise Babiak, Luke Guerrero, Ainsley Hackler, Elizabeth Martin, Kennedy Ocepek, Delilah Stillwell, and Phoebe Weiss. They all did a fantastic job of showcasing their artistic talent and following the theme, "One Faith, One Family." Unfortunately, while no one won, Phoebe Weiss did come in 4th place. This author is hopeful that one day one of them will win the contest and continue pursuing their passion for the arts.



# THE HISTORY OF THE “BEE”

BY SHANE PARKER



The spelling bee in the U.S. during the early 1800s was used as a way for students to practice spelling aloud. The word “bee” in spelling bee comes from an old term that means a gathering where people work together on a task. Spelling competitions became popular in schools because spelling was considered an important skill for education for education and communication. In 1925, the first national spelling competition, The Scripps National Spelling Bee was held in Washington D.C. Overtime, the competition grew and began including students all across the U.S and even other countries. Today, spelling bees continue to challenge students and celebrate strong vocabulary, memory, and language skills. In fourth grade at Marquette Academy, not only was Nate DeLaTorre the class winner, but he was also the schoolwide champion.



## MEET THE FIFTH GRADE SPELLING BEE CLASS CHAMPION

BY CARTER JOHNSON

Scarlett Moline is a 10-year-old girl who has been going to Marquette for five years now. During her time at our school, she has learned a lot. Scarlett has two siblings. Scarlett likes to play volleyball both outside and at school, which shows how much she really enjoys the sport. Scarlett is also good at gymnastics. One more thing she likes to practice is handstands, which help her improve at gymnastics. Scarlett’s favorite subject is ELA. It seems like she enjoys reading books. Furthermore, Scarlett enjoys learning new vocabulary and sharing her ideas in class. Scarlett is a hard-working student, and she enjoys participating in sports both inside and outside of school. She is looking forward to improving in school and beyond.



# GETTING TO KNOW THE 6TH- GRADE SPELLING BEE CHAMPION

BY MASON LYONS



The spelling bee is a competition designed to see who is the best at spelling. It can help improve English skills and offers many benefits. There are also strategies to win the spelling bee and ways to prepare for it. There are some good ways to prepare for the spelling bee. You can make flashcards and practice the words that way. You can also simulate a spelling bee with friends to help prepare. You could also use resources online and study that way. Even with all these, the best way to study for it is to analyze the list the teacher gives you. Mrs. Babiak said, “They can prepare by studying the list I gave them.”

The winner of this year’s 6th-grade class spelling bee was Liam Brewer. He has been going to Marquette since the 4th grade. Liam’s favorite subject is English because it’s fun and he likes the teacher. One of Liam’s challenges was getting distracted by his friends. Liam says he benefits by “Learning new vocabulary words.” Mrs. Babiak said. “Liam won by knowing that vowels work together, asking for clarification on words, or asking for definitions and parts of speech.”

There are many benefits to a spelling bee. People can enhance their English and vocabulary skills. If you manage to win the spelling bee, your confidence will skyrocket because of how much studying you need to do, and you will increase your study habits. Mrs. Babiak says, “The spelling bee hits on a lot of the stuff that is missed, like some phonemic awareness skills needed for lifetime spelling.”



## MEET “THE SEVENTH GRADE STAR”

BY LOGAN SCHNEIDER

Cameron Mucci, a transfer into Marquette Academy this school year, was a seventh-grade class winner of the grade-level spelling bee. According to Cameron, he was excited to participate in the spelling bee. The day of the school-wide spelling bee, Cameron went through many rounds while being cheered on by his classmates. He said he felt the crowd’s excitement and how ecstatic they were for him. “Seeing how happy they were made me keep going,” Cameron went on to say. When his time came to an end, Cameron felt disappointed, but still proud that he represented the seventh-grade class to the fullest extent.



# NEW STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON EIGHTH GRADE

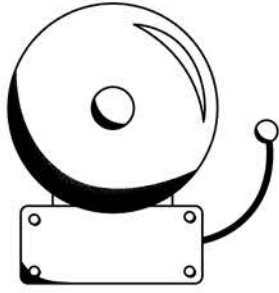
BY FIONA MCGRATH

Rita\_McLaughlin is one of the newest students at Marquette. She came from Seneca Grade School. Rita says, "It wasn't as hard as I feel like it is for most people because I knew people here." Coming to a new school can be hard, depending on how the people there are and how they welcome you. Rita mentioned, "I never worried about people judging me, impressing people at the school, because people are nice and made me feel better. Marquette is much smaller than most schools, which can be difficult to adjust to." Rita came to Marquette because "my mom knows Marquette, and I knew Marquette, and I already knew a couple of students, so it was just a good idea." A piece of advice Rita has for anyone starting at a new school is, "To keep quiet and keep to yourself for the first few days of it, then you can join in once you realize how everyone acts."

Rita discussed how Marquette was easier to adapt to because of its small size, especially since Rita didn't have to get introduced to and memorize so many names. It comes in handy when the teachers or other workers at your new school help you out when you first come. Rita says, "Mrs. Babiak, she didn't do anything different, but that made me feel happy because I understood her sarcasm, and Miss Wong gave me extra time and helped me since I wasn't a Christian. Before I came here, I didn't know everything; she didn't blame me, she helped me."

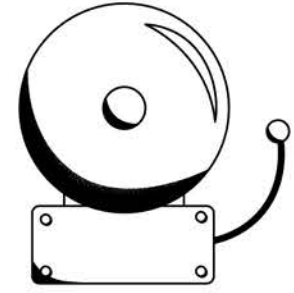
After only a few weeks at Marquette, the whole school, including Rita, got to enjoy playing games during Catholic Schools Week. That introduced the more fun things that go on in eighth grade, rather than the work. Rita has also experienced the work of an eighth grader when, along with the rest of her classmates who plan to attend Marquette High School, she had to write an essay and obtain two letters of recommendation for their high school scholarships. Although there has been a bit more work than fun, spending time with the friends she has made has been the best part every day.





# LIFE BETWEEN BELLS: ORGANIZATION

BY JORDYN RIX



Keeping track of all of your things in junior high is one of two things: Super easy or, if you look at the junior high hallway, a struggle most days. At this age, most of us are not wired to think about where we put our things from one moment to the next. However, this author spoke with some teachers and fellow students about ways to keep themselves organized. To help you, here is a list of things you can do to stay organized:

- Keep your assignments and class information organized by subject. Put them in binders, notebooks, or folders.
- If you find yourself stuffing loose papers in your bag or grabbing different notebooks for the same class, it's time to stop and reorganize!
- Clean out your backpack every few days. Decide where to keep the things you want to hold on to.
- Offload things you no longer need to carry around.

Often cited as the secret to success is the concept that organization is more than just meeting deadlines and acing tests. It is an essential skill that can benefit us in our personal, professional, and academic lives. Creating and keeping an organized environment can help us be more productive, feel less stressed, and balance the numerous responsibilities in life.



## FUTURE JOBS SPOTLIGHT: THE TRADES

BY CARTER NOONAN

In 2026, employment is expanding with the use of technology and AI, but that still doesn't stop the increase in labor workers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs in the trades have increased. Jobs in the trades include: HVAC Technicians, electricians, automotive technicians, and construction workers. The trade industry offers enormous benefits, and it's not hard to get into.

### Why People Want to Join the Trades

Many young college-age young adults want to join the trades. For starters, it avoids college debt and the need to take out student loans. Most importantly, it saves money. Next, people join the trades because of job security. Once you get hired, you can only grow in your position. In the trades, you get paid to learn. As an apprentice, you show up and shadow a worker while also getting paid to help. Once you have completed training, your salary can grow. This is done by working overtime, staying in the trade for an extended period, and, if you're able to join a good union, your wage can increase.

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# ¡HOLA! MEET THE FACE OF THE SPANISH CLASSROOM



BY CULLEN DEMINK

Mrs. Leiteritz is the Spanish teacher for Marquette Academy Elementary School . She was born in 1981 in Ottawa, IL. When Mrs. Leiteritz was growing up, she wanted to be many things, but being a teacher always stood out to her. So much so, in fact, when she was younger, she played teacher with her dolls and loved writing on a chalkboard. However, when she was in high school, she wanted to be a sports reporter or a news anchor. Her first job ever was as a newspaper delivery boy at 12. While in high school, she worked at Bianchi’s Pizza.

She then attended IVCC and took classes at Illinois State University, but graduated from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. Mrs. Leiteritz said, “I loved being a HUSKIE”. When she went to college, she studied Broadcast Journalism and Spanish. After she got her degree, she went back to school. Overall, her college experience was great, but sadly, she didn’t get to live the dorm life due to her having to commute to work to help her single mother. Mrs. Leiteritz still has friendships from her high school and college.

Mrs. Leiteritz started teaching because it was always her passion. Once she started teaching, her reasoning shifted to how she sees the value of another language. Especially since it is the 2nd most spoken language in the world. Her parting words for 8th grade are “to always be true to themselves and travel. Go explore the world.” Her favorite Dr. Seuss quote is “You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.” The only thing she wished she could have changed about her life was living in a dorm room in college. Overall, Mrs. Leiteritz is the best Spanish teacher ever.



## FROM STUDENT TO PRINCIPAL: MRS. MANN

BY OLIVIA ENTWISTLE

In 1995, our very own principal, Mrs. Brooke Rick, began attending Marquette Academy. When Mrs. Rick started at Marquette, she was a freshman. Mrs. McConaughy, Mrs. Markey, and Mrs. Rick all graduated together. Mr. Thompson, Mr. Hopkins, and Mrs. Barb all taught Mrs. Rick. During her time as a student at Marquette, Mrs. Rick was involved in softball, basketball, volleyball, cheer, and student council, but she wishes she would have tried more things, “...trying things that I was too scared to try, you know like I said, go out for the play, you know just be open to opportunities and different things.”. Mrs. Rick said that the most important thing she learned at Marquette is “The importance of my faith. I think that it helped to set the foundation for the rest of my life, so I think I just kind of developed learning how to be stronger in my faith, and you know, trust that God had a plan for me.” A piece of advice Mrs. Rick would give her younger self is, “To just enjoy the moment. You know, oftentimes we are so focused on the next step and knowing what’s happening that we don’t actually take the time to enjoy the moment. Enjoy high school, it’s a great experience, and it should be fun, and also to try everything, you never know what’s going to be your thing.” Some of Mrs. Ricks’s favorite memories from Marquette are being a part of the Marquette family, going to Marquette functions, and the senior retreat.

Mrs. Rick graduated from Marquette High in 1999 and went on to Dominican University for her bachelor’s degree, then to Aurora University for her master’s degree. She graduated from college in 2004. The first year after college, Mrs. Rick taught at Milton Pope. After a year of teaching at Milton Pope, she came over and started teaching math at Marquette while finishing her master’s degree. She then became the assistant principal and taught chemistry for half the day for the next three years. In 2010, all of the Catholic schools merged. Mrs. Rick put in for the principal position, and she got it. Mrs. Rick has now been the Principal of Marquette for 16 years. We are all very grateful for Mrs. Rick and what she has done for our school.

# FUTURE JOBS SPOTLIGHT: THE TRADES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10)

## How Apprenticeship Works

An apprenticeship is basically being a student of your chosen trade. You show up and shadow a real worker to learn and build skills. While you do this, you earn a salary. While it may not be much, the wage ranges from \$35,000 to \$50,000. If you really think about it, you're making this amount just to show up and learn. One drawback of an apprenticeship is that there is a lot of watching while you are learning. There are times you can be on hand, but that happens slowly over time.

## How To Become An Electrician and Salary Information

One of the most common jobs in the trade industry is being an electrician. To become an electrician is simple and easy. You need to have obtained a high school diploma or a GED. Then you need to have completed a 4-5 year apprenticeship. The apprenticeship consists of completing 8,000 hours of on-the-job training and traditional classroom education. Other key steps include finding a good union. The pay for apprentice electricians and young journeymen ranges from \$40,000 to \$60,000, while seasoned journeymen make \$70,000 to \$100,000 per year. Lastly, the top earners make up to \$150,000 per year. This information was obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## How To Become a Construction Worker and Salary Information

The steps to becoming a construction worker are similar to those of becoming an electrician. You have to be at least 18 and have a high school diploma or a GED. You also need an active driver's license. You can enter the trade through on-the-job training, vocational school, and/or union apprenticeships. Training includes safety certification for heavy lifting and experience with hand tools. The entry-level pay ranges from \$25,000 to \$30,000 per year. The average pay is \$44,000 to \$50,000 per year. The top earners can make up to \$60,000 to \$90,000 per year. There are other positions in construction, like job site managers. That position includes a nice pay raise. The pay for a job site manager starts at \$75,000 to \$80,000, and after 5 years, you can earn up to \$140,000 plus per year.

## How To Become An Automotive Technician and Salary Information

As with the other jobs mentioned, you need a high school diploma or GED, followed by specialized training at a vocational school. From there, you can either go to community college or complete an apprenticeship, which can take around 6 months to 2 years. The starting pay for an apprentice is around \$40,000 per year. The starting pay for an automotive technician is \$65,000 to \$81,000 per year. Some top-earning automotive technicians make \$100,000 plus per year.

Overall, the trades are an extremely solid path to get into. It is already growing and will continue to grow due to the increase in job opportunities and the ease of getting into small schools. Most importantly, the intrigue of getting paid as an apprentice. Additionally, if you stick with it, you could make a lot of money. Some positions in the trades offer over \$100,000 plus in pay as a yearly salary, which is pretty good. Veteran electricians can make up to \$150,000 per year, and construction job site managers can make \$140,000 plus per year, while top-earning automotive technicians make \$100,000 plus per year.



# LITTLE LEAGUE WORLD SERIES

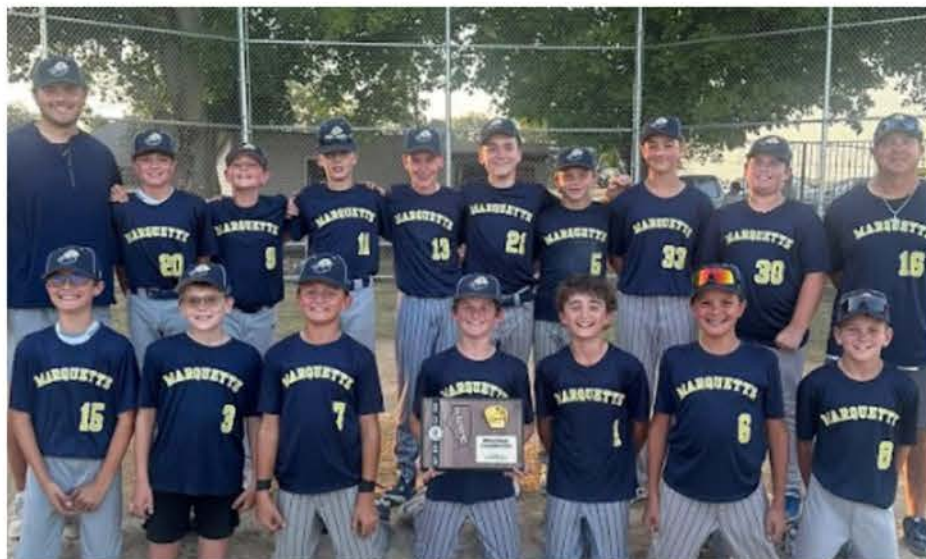
BY ALIVIA ANDREONI

The Little League World Series for softball features the top 12 teams representing different U.S. regions, including Central, Mid-Atlantic, New England, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest, West, and the Host (North Carolina). International regions include Asia-Pacific, Canada, Europe, Africa, and Latin America. All the teams are competing to be the best Little League Softball team in the world. This year the little league world series will be held in Greenville, North Carolina, at Stallings Stadium at Elm Street Park from August 2-9, 2026. North Carolina has hosted this event for the last five years. Last year, West Suburban Little League (Mid-Atlantic Region) won. The final score was 1-0, and they played Floyd's Knobs Community Club Little League (Central Region). The teams are selected at the local league level and must win a series of qualifying tournaments in order to reach the World Series. Admission for the Softball World Series remains free, making it a budget-friendly family experience. This is a great fun family experience, especially for girls interested in playing softball in the future.



## GETTING READY FOR WHAT IS TO COME

BY GRIFFIN NOVOTNEY



As high school baseball begins, Coach DeAngelo starts to ponder ways to build on last season's success. Coach DeAngelo said, " Depending on the number of kids, it will depend if the 6th graders will play. Coach DeAngelo stated, "His favorite thing about baseball is seeing players develop individuality and grow as a team, and seeing everyone succeed." Coach DeAngelo said, " we need to fill in the holes that the 8th graders made." Lastly, he said, " I like seeing them grow as players and compete to their best ability, and play as a team, and not individually."

# IS IT POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE YOUR RUNNING?

BY ELLIOTT EDGCOMB

How can you improve your running in cross country? According to Quora, one runner states, "You will need to stay on a strict diet that is rich in carbohydrates and protein." Second, you will need to rest when needed." Rest is needed because injury can occur. Next, make sure you are on a strong base. When practicing running, make sure you run on different terrains, such as creek crossings, hard-terrain dirt trails, and gravel roads. You should also run on rainy, sunny days to be ready for any conditions when it is time to start the season again.



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## OFF - SEASON TIPS FOR STAYING IN SHAPE AS A CHEERLEADER

BY ANNABELLE HAIDUKE

As the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade girls cheerleading comes to an end, some might want to stay in shape in the off - season to get ready for next season. So how can they prepare?

First, they could join other sports to keep themselves moving and training. If they don't want to do other sports or can't, they can practice at home. They could start with simple stretching 1 - 2 times a day, and add some conditioning. Each week, it will start to become easier, and you will notice that you have gotten more flexible. After you notice a change, you can advance what you are doing, by making the stretching and conditioning harder. Then, by the time next season starts, you will be in shape, and fully prepared!



# NOTHIN' BUT NET: A LOOK BACK AT THE 2025-26 BASKETBALL HIGHLIGHTS

BY NOAH NOVOTNEY

The 7th grade basketball team had a great season. They had four sixth graders and seven seventh graders. The players were Sullivan Auter, Elliot Edgecomb, Liam Gretencord, Gannon Hall, Bryce Herman, Ty Hopkins, Cash Lucas, Michael Miller, Cameron Mucci, Bo Neri, and Peyton Snell. They had a record of 19-6. They won a lot of games because they fought hard. They may have lost some games, but they always fought hard to the end. They won their Conference tournament against Wallace. They got the one seed of the regional, so they got a bye. They came into the regional semi-final and won against St Acutis. Then, they went to play the regional championship against Holy Cross. They fought hard to the end, but sadly lost. Congratulations to a hard fought season.



The 8th-grade basketball team ended a great season. They played hard all four quarters. The players on this team are Gerard Cooper, Zaylor Faull, Nick Grube, Bryce Herman, Ty Hopkins, Carter Johnson, Mason Lyons, Thomas Miller, Griffin Novotney, Noah Novotney, Shane Parker, and Logan Schnieder. Their record was 24-2. They won a lot of games and built momentum to win them. They lost 2 games to two really good teams that both played in the state tournament. They won their regional championship against St Acutis in the final seconds. They went to the sectional finals, where they sadly lost. The awards they won were the conference tournament and the regional championship. Have fun in high school, boys.



# DOUBLE CHAMPIONS: 7TH & 8TH GRADE VOLLEYBALL DO WELL IN STATE TOURNAMENT SERIES

BY MACKENZIE HAMM

The Seventh and eighth-grade teams are coached by Mindy McConnaughay. Mrs. McConnaughay says, “Both teams have competed at a high level and brought home the conference championship trophies.” The Seventh-grade team ended the regular season with a record of 21 - 1, and the eighth-grade team with a record of 17 - 2. Coach states, “Both teams have improved on communication and court sense. One of their biggest strengths this season was serve receive.” She says, “Running an effective offence out of receive is huge for any level of volleyball, and we’ve had some great runs this year.” One of her favorite moments this season was winning the conference tournament. She also says, “But I am most proud of the moments this year when we showed mental toughness and came from behind to win, especially against Shepherd.” Mrs. McConnaughay thinks that one of their biggest strengths this year was “their athleticism and knowledge of the game. When we are communicating and play our roles, we are a tough team to beat.” Coach feels the team has “done a nice job of correcting our errors and staying mentally tough. It takes a lot of maturity to pick ourselves and our teammates up.” A few things that are unique about this team are that they genuinely get along, are very supportive of each other, get super excited when a teammate masters a skill, and have random dance parties or sing at any given time. When the team has a negative attitude or energy toward other teammates – doing others’ jobs or getting down on themselves – Mrs. McConnaughay will “call it out right away” or “call a time out to tell them when we get negative, we lose!” She has big expectations for both the Seventh and Eighth grade teams. She says, “They are both very competitive teams that want to win. If they play to their abilities, the sky’s the limit for them!” I hope to make a deep run in the postseason with both groups.”

Most recently, the seventh-grade girls won the Regional Championship game and their Sectional. They head to their first game as part of the Elite 8 tonight, March 13, 2026, at 5:45 pm. Good luck, Lady Knights! We are incredibly proud of you.

The eighth-grade team also performed well, winning their Regional Championship game and advancing to the sectional championship game on Monday. A win on Monday means they will also punch their ticket to a state performance next weekend, March 20-21, 2026. Good luck Lady Knights!

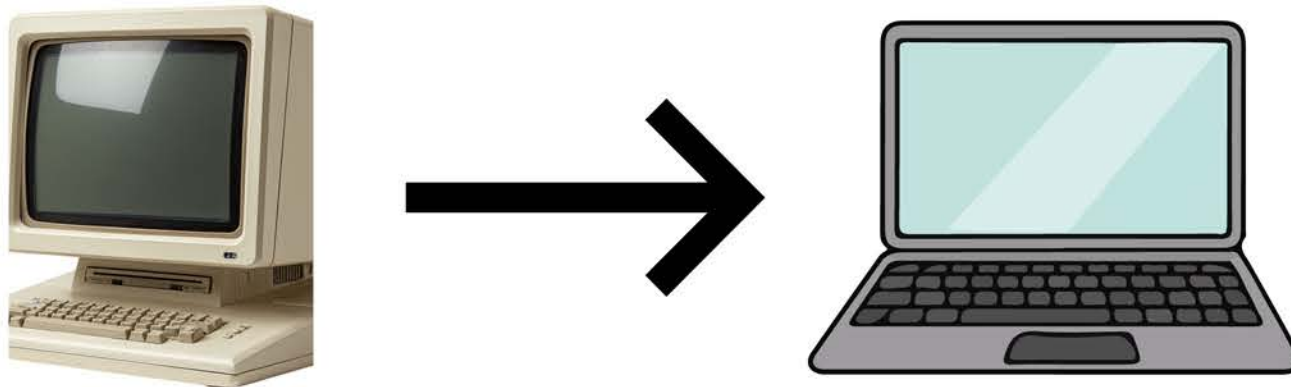


# A LOOK BACK: TECH IN SCHOOLS THE 90S V. 2026

BY ROGER FINDLEY

Classroom technology has evolved over the last 36 years. From mimeographs to CD-ROMs to Chromebooks. Join us on this journey back in time as we explore what it was like in the great 90s vs now.

To start this adventure, we have to go all the way to the mimeograph, which was used to print out worksheets. The mimeograph is a machine that uses stencils made out of waxed mulberry paper. The waxed paper is held up by a stiff piece of cardstock at the top of the machine. Once that was done, the stencil was wrapped around an ink-filled drum, and at the same time, a blank sheet of paper was drawn between the rotating ink drum and the pressure drum. The ink was forced through the drum and onto the paper. Now we have printers that can print hundreds of sheets a minute. The most common printer you can find at a school is a laser printer. A laser printer uses a process called Xerography, which employs a laser and toner to print the page's graphics.



Before Chromebooks, computers were very scarce in schools. They were most likely to be found in a separate computer lab with little to no internet access. The computers you could find at the time would most likely be Apple IIs, early Macintoshes, and Commodore 64s. These computers couldn't store very much data since they only had floppy disks and CD-ROMs. Now, instead of learning how to use a computer, you can learn using a computer. Most modern computers found in schools are Chromebooks due to their affordability and reliability. Chromebooks can store much more information locally and in the cloud, so the data can be used across different devices. With the power of applications like Google Classroom, teachers can assign work to students more easily. Also, applications like Teachers Ease allow teachers to grade faster and students to see their grades and missing assignments for each class.

Even with all the great things new technology brings, there is a downside, too. Many students are smartphone-addicted and like to play games on Chromebooks in class. So stricter rules have to be put in place, like smartphones must be fully shut down and put in bags at all times, and if a student gets caught playing games in class, it can result in severe repercussions, such as demerits and revoked computer privileges for the rest of the year. Even with all the downsides of this new technology, we still have to appreciate its benefits and how it has changed everyone's lives.

# STUDENT COUNCIL'S FIRST DANCE FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

BY KALLYN DISS

Student Council has been hard at work. They recently put on the junior high dance for the 7th and 8th grades. It was held in the Marquette Elementary school gymnasium. Students said it was 'so fun'. This author recently talked to the Student Council president, Olivia Entwistle, about the dance details and her take on school dances. Here are some questions and *answers from the interview*:

**Q: Why did you want to have a dance?**

**A:** I wanted to have this dance because everyone always has such a great time at these dances. This dance was really a benefit dance, so the entrance fee was bringing in a pet donation of some sort. Student council is also taking all the money we got from the 50/50 raffle and everything that we got from this dance and we were bringing it to Pet Project. I'm just really glad that we had such a great turnout. We got so much stuff for that project it's absolutely amazing. I'm just so grateful for everyone who came and brought things, and I'm just so happy to bring all the things that we collected to Pet Project. I hope everyone had an amazing time. I know I did.

**Q: What was the theme of the dance?**

**A:** The theme of the dance was Winter Wonderland.

**Q: What was the date and time of the dance?**

**A:** The date was Feb 27, and the time was 6-8 pm.

**Q: What is your favorite part of having dances?**

**A:** My favorite part about having the dances is definitely just getting to see everybody having such a great time. I love watching them singing and dancing their hearts out. It also makes me really proud of the student council that we could come together and put on this great time for everybody. I really just like to see everybody enjoying it together and making lots and lots of good memories.



## WINTER OLYMPICS AND ITS BACKGROUND

BY NOAH RODRIGUEZ

What are the Winter Olympics? The Winter Olympic Games are an international multi-sport event held every four years. This event features competitions on ice and snow. The games are usually held in February, during the winter season. The International Olympic Committee is the governing body of the Olympics, with the Olympic Charter defining its structure and authority. The IOC had selected Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo (Italy) to host 2026, the French Alps (France) in 2030, and Utah (United States) in 2034.

The first Winter Olympic Games, the 1924 Winter Olympics, were held in Chamonix, France. The modern Olympic Games were inspired by the Ancient Olympic Games, which were held in Olympia, Greece, from 776 BCE to 394 CE. The Baron Pierre de Coubertin of France founded the IOC 1,500 years later, in 1894, and led the first modern Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, in 1896. The Games were held every four years from 1924 to 1936, interrupted in 1940 and 1944 by World War II, and resumed in 1948. Until 1992, the Summer and Winter Olympic Games were held in the same year. The Winter and Summer Olympics are now held 2 years apart.

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# WINTER OLYMPICS AND ITS BACKGROUND

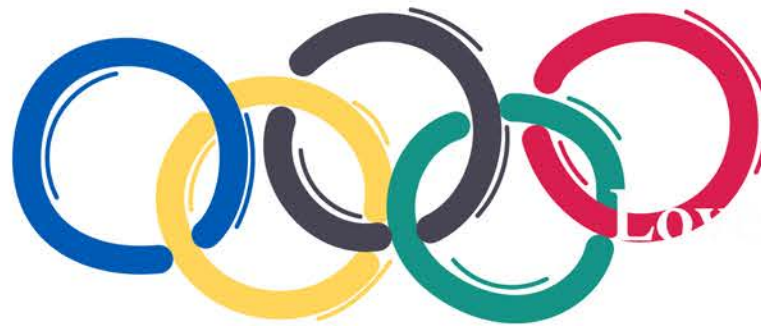
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The Winter Olympics consist of nine disciplines: Bobsleigh, curling, ice hockey, Nordic skiing, patrol, cross-country skiing, and skating. The winter Games have evolved since their inception. Sports and disciplines have been added, and some, such as Alpine skiing, luge, short-track speed skating, freestyle skiing, skeleton, and snowboarding, have earned permanent spots in the Olympic program.

What were the early years of the Winter Olympics like? A predecessor, the Nordic Games, was organised by General Viktor Gustaf Balck in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1901, and was held again in 1903 and 1905, and then every fourth year thereafter until 1926. Black was a charter member of the IOC and a close friend of Olympic Games founder Pierre de Coubertin. He attempted to have winter sports, specifically figure skating, added to the Olympic programme, but was unsuccessful until the 1908 Summer Olympics in London. Four figure skating events were contested, at which Ulrich Salchow (10-time world champion) and Madge Syers won the individual titles.

Three years later, Italian count Eugenio Brunetta d'Usseaux proposed that the IOC stage a week of winter sports included as part of the 1912 Summer Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. The organisers opposed this idea because they desired to protect the integrity of the Nordic Games and were concerned about a lack of facilities for winter sports. The idea was resurrected for the 1916 Games, which were to be held in Berlin, Germany. A winter sports week with speed skating, figure skating, ice hockey, and Nordic skiing was planned, but the 1916 Olympics were cancelled after the outbreak of World War I.

In the 2026 games, Norway was the country with the most medals in all Winter Olympics, with the United States a close second, and the Netherlands and Italy tied for third.



## LENT IS UPON US: WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

BY LIAM GRETECORD

During the season of Lent, there are many things parishioners should do to prepare for Jesus. During Lent, we should ponder and prepare for the death and resurrection of Jesus. According to Father Patrick, "In Matthew chapter 6, Jesus invites us to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving." He went on to say, "We can think about when and where we are going to pray each day. We can read a story from the Bible and meditate upon it. We can pray the Rosary and contemplate the life of Jesus." When we fast, we should think about the things we enjoy and give them up for Lent. Fasting helps us appreciate what we have and unite our sacrifices to the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross." Some ideas for fasting are: food, social media, and video games. To give alms, you can give your talents, time, and money. "If we have money, we can give it to a charity or to the Church." (Father Patrick). Another great way we can grow closer to God is by going to Confession and receiving the Eucharist. Father Patrick goes on to say, "Jesus came to forgive us for our sins and bring us back to God the Father. The sacrament of Confession forgives us of our sins, and it prepares us to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Jesus calls us to come to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day to receive him and learn about his life, death, and resurrection."

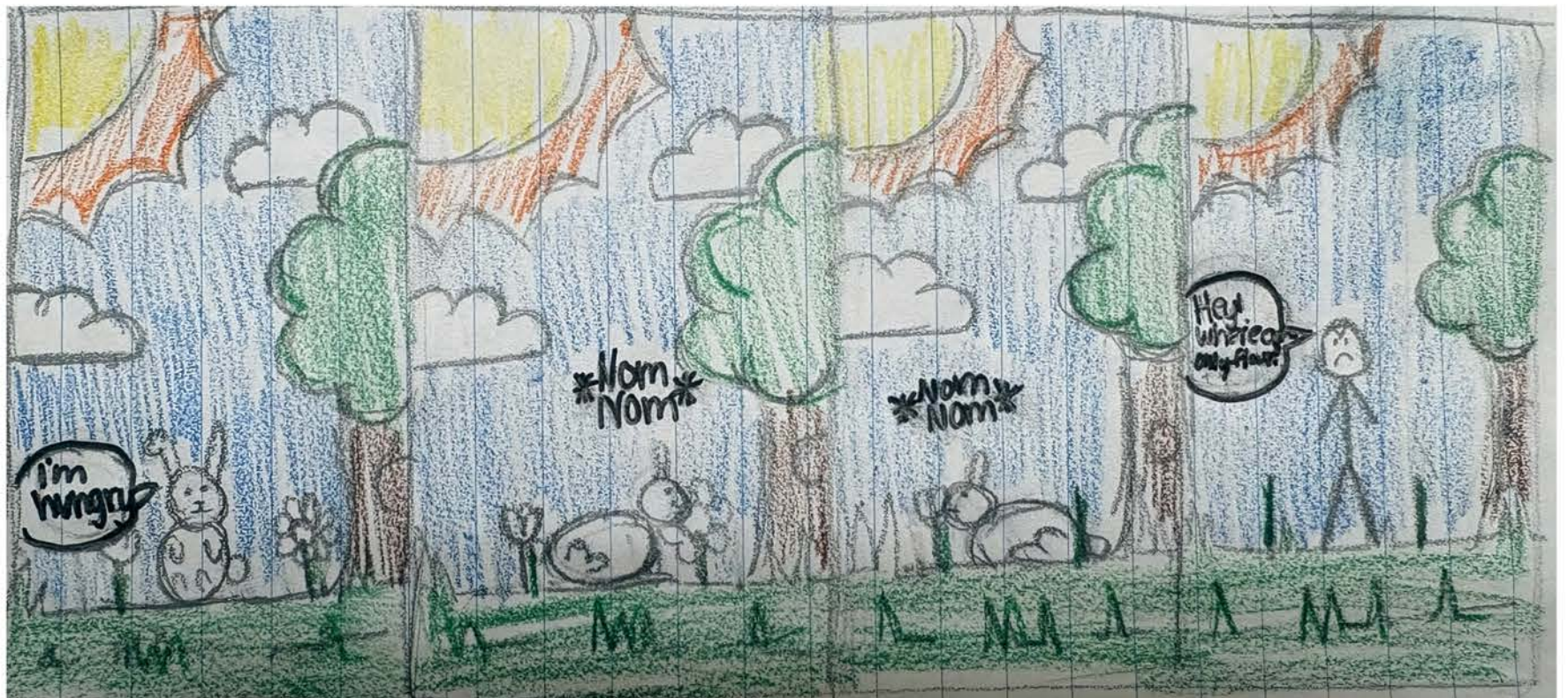
# THE CRIME, PART 3

BY MAYLEE HAMER



# THE BUNNY

BY CYNTHIA ROBLES





# PICNIC BY MARINA RIBEIRO



# LITTLE OWL BY CORBIN CLEM

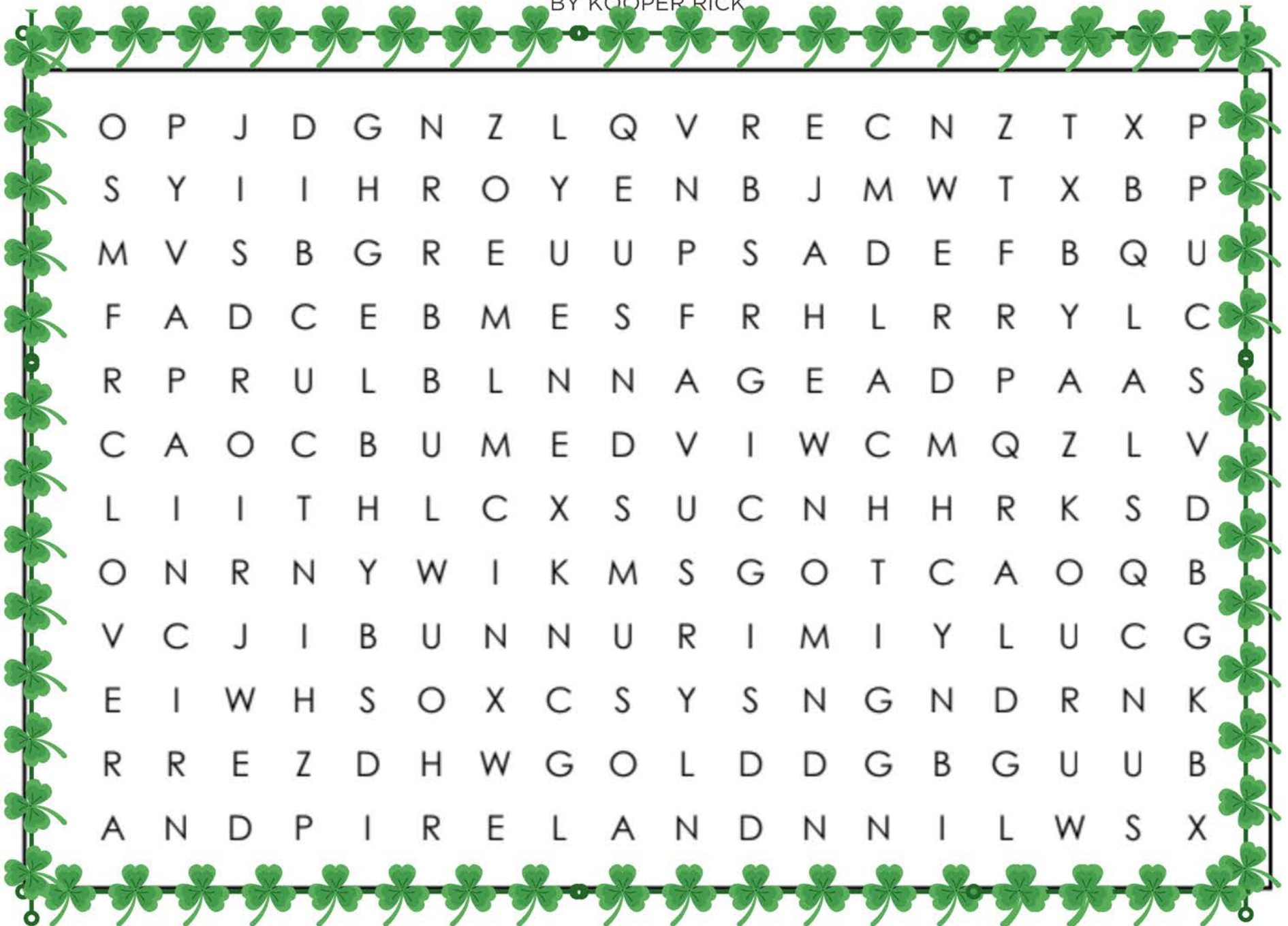


# BILLY BY CORBIN CLEM



# FUN AND GAMES: WORD SEARCH

BY KOOPER RICK

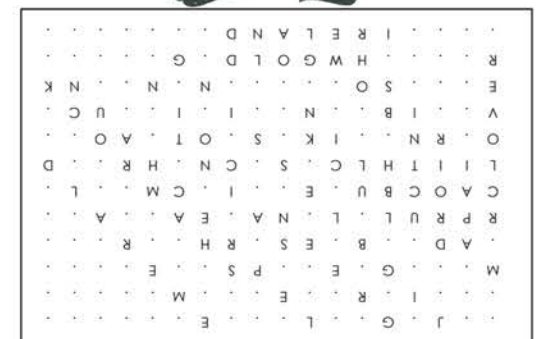


Find the following words in the puzzle.  
Words are hidden →, ↓, and ↘.

LEPRECHAUN  
SHAMROCK  
BLESSING  
RAINBOW  
EMERALD  
IRELAND

DUBLIN  
CLOVER  
GREEN  
IRISH  
MARCH  
SAINT

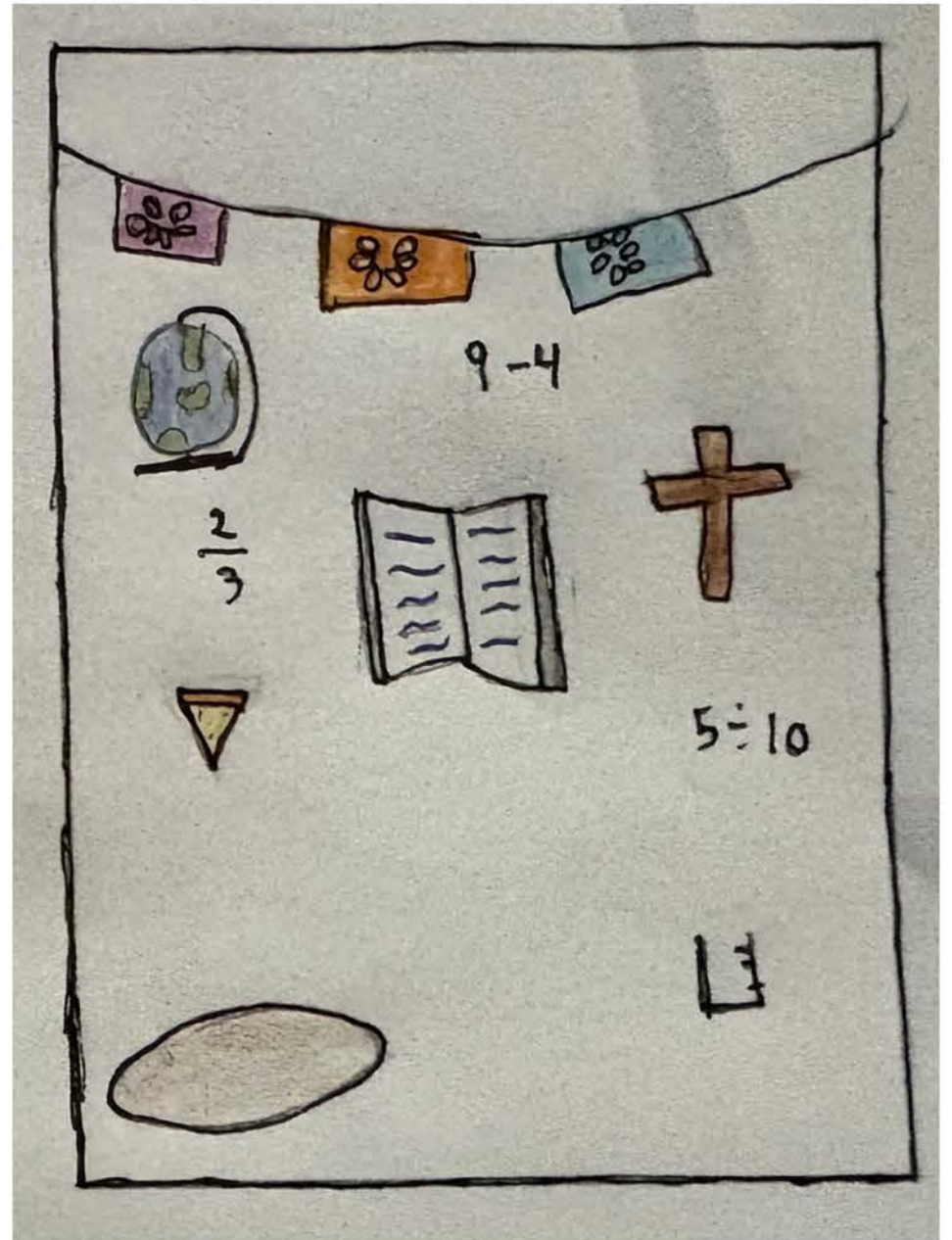
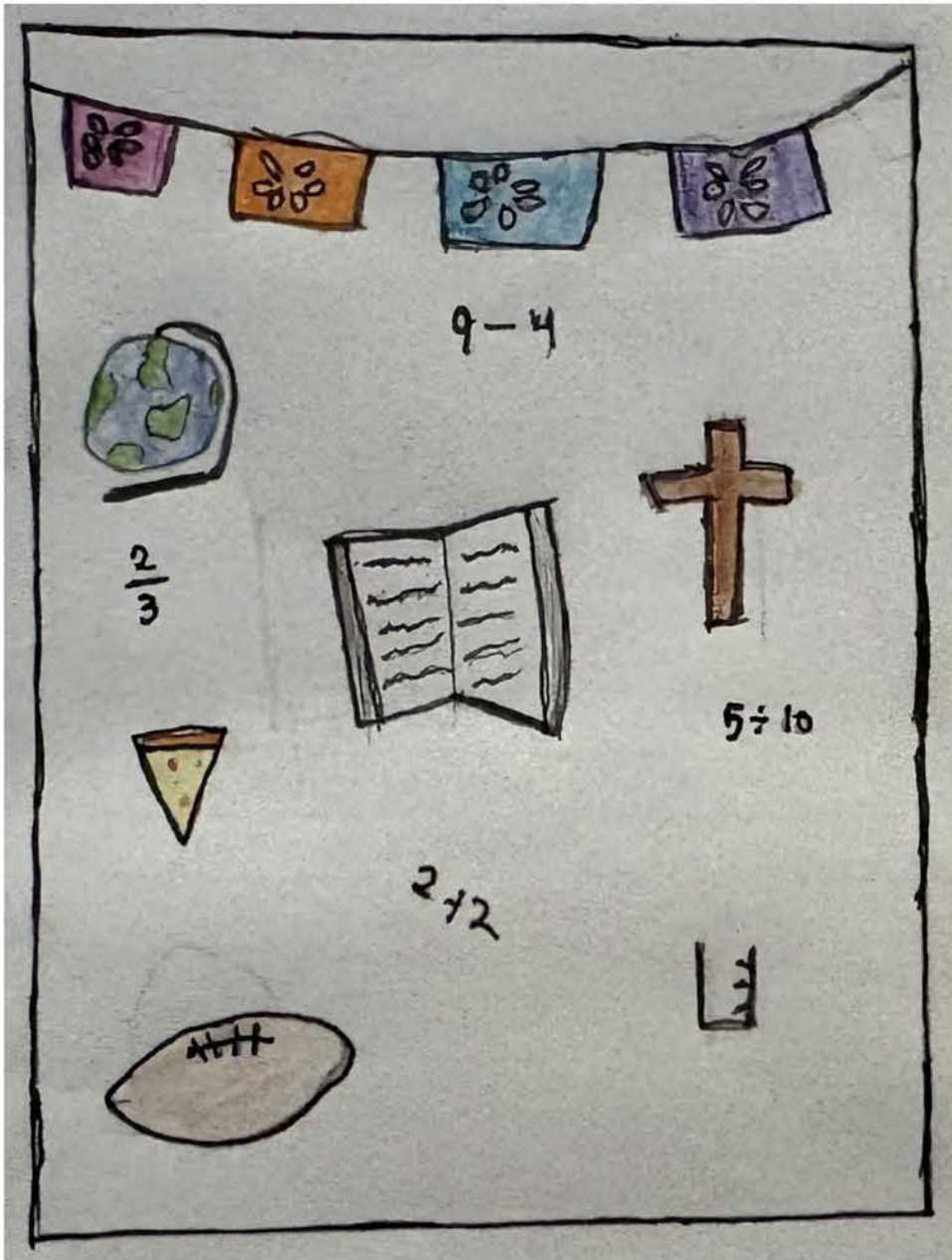
GOLD  
LUCK  
COIN  
POT  
JIG



# FUN AND GAMES: SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

BY KYLAH GALLEGOS

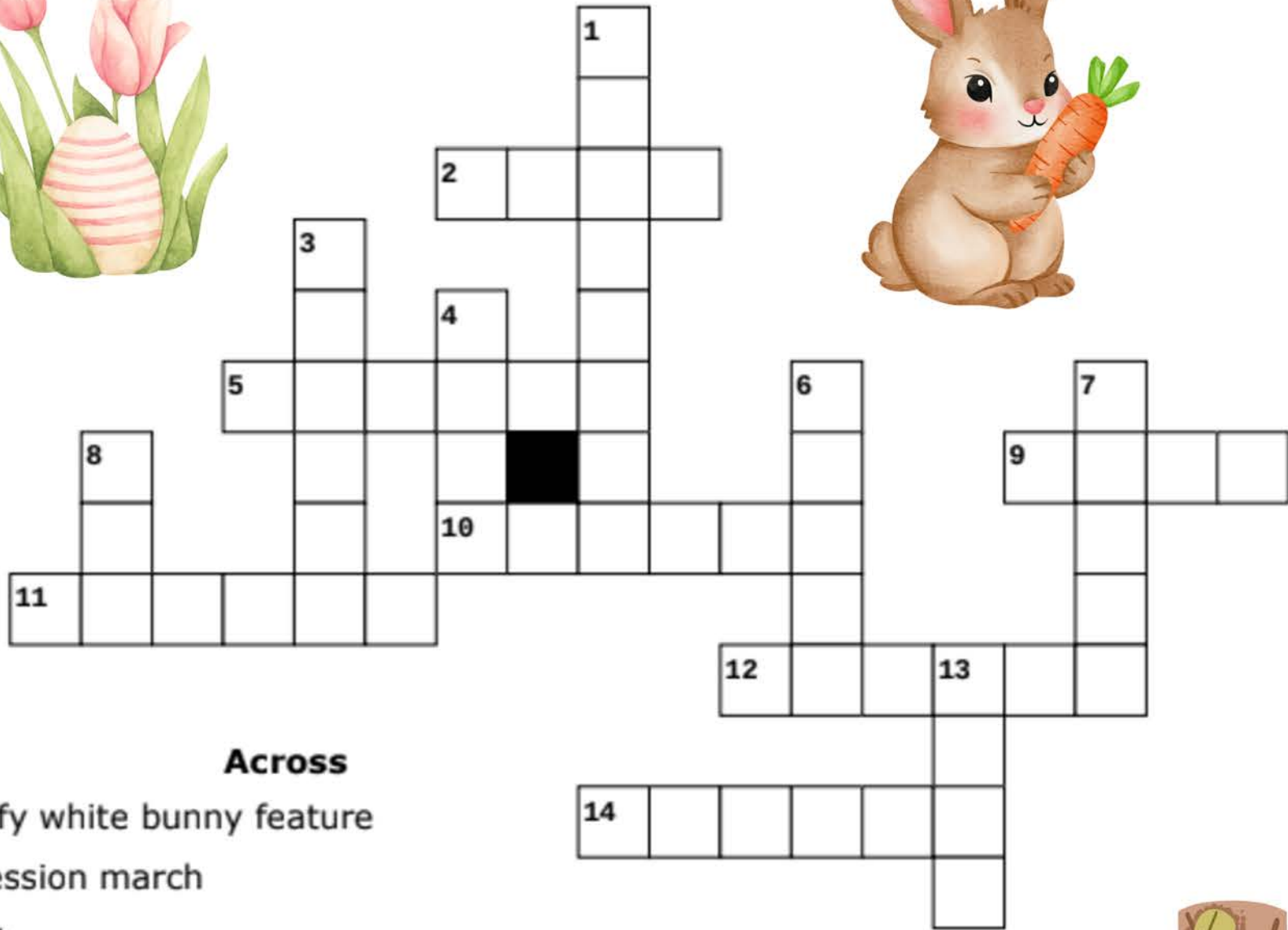
Can you find the **FIVE** differences?



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

# FUN AND GAMES: CROSSWORD

BY PARKER FUCHS

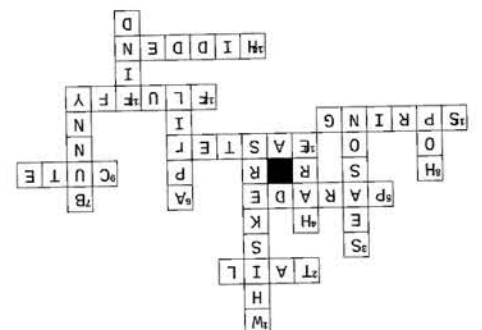


### Across

- 2. a fluffy white bunny feature
- 5. procession march
- 9. sweet
- 10. spring time celebration
- 11. comes before summer
- 12. soft yellow spring baby
- 14. Scavenger hunt

### Down

- 1. scratchy on rabbits face
- 3. spring summer fall winter
- 4. long-eared Easter mascot
- 6. the month of rain showers
- 7. Easter animal
- 8. small jump
- 13. what you do in a scavenger hunt



# FUN AND GAMES: GUESS THE CELEBRITY

BY EMILY DRAKE

How well do you know you know these celebrities? Match their younger photos to their adult photos.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

BY STELLA MOLINE

## MARCH

Date	Activity
March 13	Girls 7th-grade State Volleyball (Elite 8) <u>5:45pm</u> (away)
March 14	TBA - 7th-grade State Volleyball (Possible Final 4 and Championship)
March 16	Girls 8th-grade Volleyball Sectional Championship Game
March 20	TBA - 8th-grade State Volleyball Series (Possible Elite 8)
March 21	TBA - 8th-grade State Volleyball (Possible Final 4 and Championship)



## APRIL



Date	Activity
April 1	NO Daycare or aftercare
April 2-10	NO School (Easter break)
April 20	PS- Donuts with Grown-Ups All Academy mass
April 21	PS- Donuts with Grown-Ups
April 22	PS- Donuts with Grown-Ups
April 23	PS- Donuts with Grown-Ups
April 25	Confirmation @ 10:30 am   at St. Columba Church

## MAY

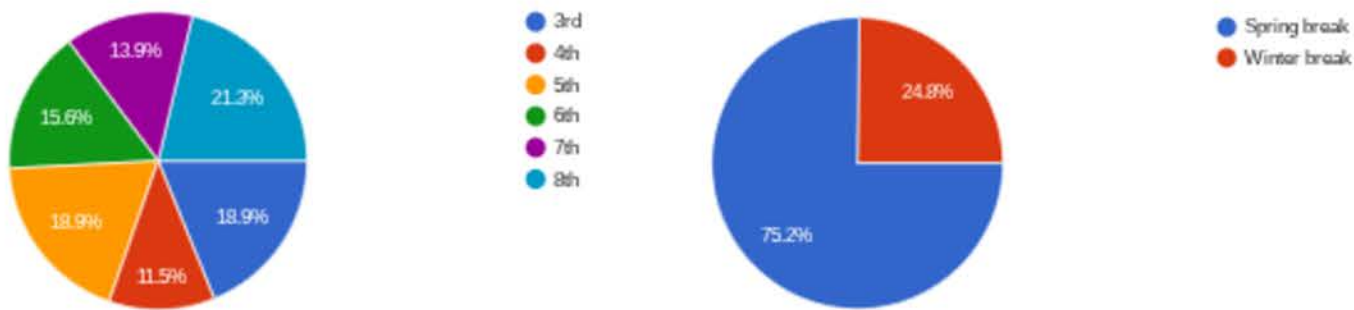
Dates	Activity
May 3	First Holy Communion at 9:00 am at St. Columba Church
May 8	No School- Teacher Inservice
May 9	May Merriment XLIV: Wanderlust -A Night Around the World
May 15	8th Grade Awards after Mass PS-Last Day
May 19	8th Grade Graduation 5:30 PM at St. Columba Church
May 21	GS-Last Day/ Park day right after Mass NO aftercare



# STUDENTS DECIDE WHICH IS BETTER: SPRING BREAK OR WINTER BREAK

BY CLARA BLOOD

Which break is better? Marquette Academy, grades third through eighth, thinks Spring break is better by 75%. Only 25% of students like winter, because Christmas is coming up, it's a longer break, and it's snowy. One of the biggest reasons Marquette Academy students prefer winter or spring break is the weather, according to 63.6% of students. For example, some people prefer colder weather, so they picked winter break. Others like warmer weather, so they picked spring break. The second major reason is that it is more fun for them. In agreement with 56.2% of students. For instance, some students like the cold weather and snow because they get to go sledding, make snowmen, build igloos, and have snowball fights. But others prefer warm-weather activities, such as going for walks or bike rides, fishing, playing outside, or going to the park. In summary, the majority of students chose spring break over winter break, suggesting they prefer warmer weather and warm-weather activities.



## WHAT ARE PILGRIMAGES?

BY LIAM GRETECORD

Pilgrimages are also a great way to get closer to God. There are two pilgrimages coming up in March at St. Brigid Parish. The pilgrimage will be to the childhood home of Pope Leo XVI near Chicago. From there, those on the pilgrimage will go up to the Shrine of Christ's Passion in Indiana to pray at the life-sized Stations of the Cross. If you want to sign up for pilgrimages, there are forms at the parish office and online sign-up sheets. Father Patrick also said, "A pilgrimage is like a field trip of faith." When we go on pilgrimages, we encounter God. Father Patrick recently went to Mexico to visit the Our Lady of Guadalupe Basilica in Mexico City, which gets over twenty million visitors a year. "I met people from all around the world who came from diverse backgrounds and beliefs. Something about Our Lady drew them to the site." Father Patrick also got to see the five-hundred-year-old Tilma of St. Juan Diego, which miraculously has the image of Mary on it. "It is such a gift to be Catholic and to have a home anywhere in the world." So, what do you think about pilgrimages? Will you ever go on a pilgrimage? Are you going to give something up for Lent? Hopefully, this article convinced you to, and I would like to give a special thanks to Father Patrick. May God bless you.



# WHAT IS THE MOST BENEFICIAL SUBJECT TO LEARN ABOUT IN SCHOOL?

BY LEAH MICHELINI

Science, Math, English, Spanish.... they are all beneficial subjects, but which one has the most benefits? In this article, the benefits of 4 commonly known middle school subjects will be discussed. You will also hear the perspective of some of the Marquette Academy students and what they think the most beneficial subject in school.

Science offers many benefits, such as more active engagement and critical thinking. It also benefits communication and teamwork skills. U design says, "science class often involves group projects... Students learn to share ideas, listen actively, and delegate tasks, promoting vital interpersonal skills." Science class also engages STEM (science, Technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields and will help students in the future by guiding them to better career paths.

Everyone thinks that since we speak English, it's not very beneficial. Even though we speak it, there are actually many benefits. Some benefits include enhanced English and language skills. Bay Atlantic University states, "English is the global language of communication, business, and academia. It is the gateway to cultural exchange, higher education, and international careers. Starting early takes advantage of the brain's natural language-learning capacity, enabling children to acquire better pronunciation, stronger communication skills, and deeper cultural understanding."



Spanish is a very beneficial subject for middle schoolers. Cultural awareness improves academic success and also helps with students' social skills. Language Yard states, "Middle school Spanish classes are more important than ever. In today's world, they help young people connect globally and understand different cultures better... when you learn Spanish, you are getting ready for a diverse world."

Not many people like math, and if you do, that usually means you are good at it. But there are many benefits to math. Some include: enhancing problem-solving skills, better preparation for high school, and improved critical thinking. Jeanne Lazzarini of Novak Education says, "Math is so important on so many levels, not just for careers in STEM fields! No matter what, math is an essential skill that carries over into many areas of life. Check out these few examples: I need to tip my hair dresser 15% what is 15% of \$250. I love to swim! If one mile is 1609.34 meters and my pool is 25 meters in one length, how many lengths do I need to swim one mile?"

Some students were asked which subject they think is most beneficial in school and why. Here are some responses. One seventh-grade student, Michael Miller, says, "Math or Spanish is the most beneficial subject, because you are most likely going to use Spanish if you encounter someone who speaks Spanish. Math is for moving stuff around in your house. 5th grader, Maddy Feller, said she thinks Spanish is the most beneficial subject because "if you travel to Mexico, you know how to speak Spanish, and maybe if your job has some people that speak Spanish, you can understand." Rita McLaughlin, an 8th grader, says she thinks English is the most beneficial because you need English "in order to obtain skills that you will need in the future when working, teaching or just communicating with others."

This article explains many, many benefits of Math, Science, Spanish, and English classes for middle schoolers. Most include either social skills or will help you in the future. After a lot of research, there doesn't seem to be a single most beneficial subject for middle schoolers, according to them. But remember, even if you think a subject isn't that important, you will somehow use it in the future. Pay attention and get good grades!

# STRONG MIND, HEALTHY BODY, AND PEACEFUL SPIRIT

BY BO NERI

This spring is special because we recognize the sacrifice Jesus made for all of us. Set your way to stay on the path with God this St. Patrick's Day and Easter.

## Mental

Tell yourself you're lucky keep a solid, gold mind set keep your eyes set also on one thing, tell yourself God will help you along the way! Don't lose yourself in not knowing you aren't lucky.

## Spiritual

Search for Bible verses that make you feel lucky. Remember to know that God is the luckiest person to have as your friend. Remember books of the Bible you think are lucky. Go to a St. Patrick's church to set the mood. Remember Jesus is coming soon.

## Emotional

Be happy with it being a holiday. Don't be anxious that's what God tells us. Be glad you're a child of God. Don't worry if you don't find a shamrock, you still have luck. Don't be angry you didn't catch a leprechaun.

## Physical

Make a trap for the leprechaun or put on green so you don't get pinched. Find a four-leaf clover. Celebrate with family as well as do exercises that makes feel lucky or listen to music that makes you feel lucky.



# Meet the MA Knightly News Staff



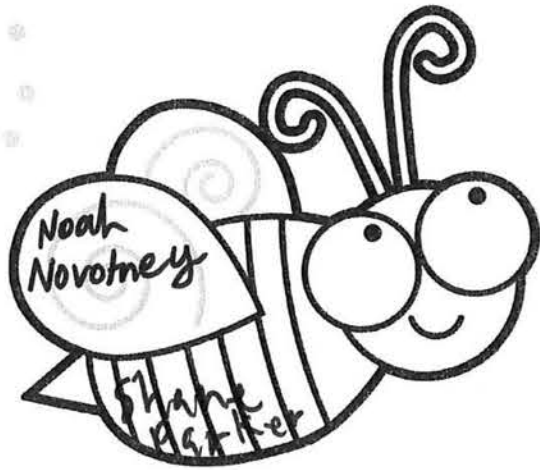
## **Eighth Grade**

Leo Alvarez	Mason Lyons
Gerard Cooper	Fiona McGrath
Cullen DeMink	Rita McLaughlin
Kallyn Diss	Tommy Miller
Emily Drake	Stella Moline
Olivia Entwistle	Carter Noonan
Zaylor Faull	Griffin Novotney
Kylah Gallegos	Noah Novotney
Nick Grube	Shane Parker
Maylee Hamer	Marina Ribeiro
Mackenzie Hamm	Noah Rodriguez
Carter Johnson	Laney Ruddick
	Logan Schneider

## **Seventh Grade**

Alivia Andreoni	Daniela Melendez
Sullivan Auter	Leah Michelini
Clara Blood	Michael Miller
Dominic Cherveney	Cameron Mucci
Corbin Clem	Bo Neri
Elliott Edgcomb	Kooper Rick
Roger Findley	Jordyn Rix
Parker Fuchs	Cynthia Robles
Liam Gretencord	Hannah Skelley
Annabelle Haiduke	Angelica Stawiarski
Bryce Hermann	Cashylon Woodin

Wishing everyone a



Bright and Happy Spring!

from the MA Knightly News Staff