



THE LIONS ROAR

"Lion pride in print"

Friday, April 8, 2016

ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL

ALBANY, TEXAS 76430

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New students make comparisons



Students discuss differences between previous schools attended. — See page 4

Band takes trip over Spring Break



The band went to Great Wolf Lodge and performed at Texas Wesleyan University. — See page 5

On track for district

High school teams ran at the district meet yesterday in Hamlin. — See page 6

Briefs

Students to attend ILPC

The newspaper staff and some journalism students will attend the Interscholastic League Press Conference April 16-17. The annual journalism convention will be held on the campus of the University of Texas in Austin.

The convention includes four workshop sessions on Saturday and two on Sunday. Journalism professionals and sponsors teach the 50-minute sessions.

Individual awards for several divisions within newspaper, yearbook and broadcast divisions will be announced on Saturday, followed by the overall publication ratings during the awards ceremony on Sunday.

The *Lions Roar* has received 10 consecutive Star Awards over the last decade, including one bronze, three silver and six gold.

Cheerleaders announced

Tryouts were held March 3 to elect next year's varsity, junior varsity, and junior high cheerleaders in the high school gym.

The varsity cheerleaders selected include Sydney Key as head cheerleader, Kaleigh Clevenger, Lindsey Lucas, Krysten Morris, Madison Ratliff, McKenna Thompson, Kourtnee Waters, and Caroline Masters. Kaley Smith will be next year's mascot.

Junior varsity cheerleaders are Mady Connally, Alayna Koemel, Jayden Torres, and Raegan Novian.

Junior high cheerleaders for 2016-17 will be Ana Balliew, Kam Browning, Ansleigh Garcia, Alli Hill, Torie Fuentes, and Hannah Trail.

Prom King, Queen crowned

Seniors Caleb Masters and Lori Davis were crowned as Prom King and Queen at the Whitney Theatre on March 19.

Three senior boys and girls were nominated for the award including Savannah Perez, Carley Price, Lori Davis, Levi Britting, Alex Faith, and Caleb Masters.

The winning couple was given a crown, a sash, and a flower.

The annual event used the theme "Enchanted" this year.



Scan QR code to go to the SchoolWay app, which can be used on both iPhone and Android.

Seniors vote for first time

Students participate in primary elections

BY PARKER MOON
Staff Writer

Several seniors took a step towards adulthood with all its responsibilities and privileges last month by voting in their first presidential primary.

"I feel more grown up now that I can vote because of the responsibility that goes with it," senior Caleb Masters said. "It's a right that everyone should exercise."

Senior Michael Cotter said voting for the first time was a reality check.

"Voting makes me feel more involved in the process because it reminds me that my voice really does mat-



Seniors Drew Neece (left) and Alex Faith vote in the presidential primaries' election. This was the first time the seniors were eligible to vote. PHOTO BY PARKER MOON

ter," Cotter said. "It made me understand that I am responsible for my own political views now and do not just rely on what my parents think."

Since the presidential race occurs only once every four years, this election offers seniors a unique opportunity.

"Now that I can vote,

I have to be more mature and take these elections seriously," senior Savannah Perez said. "You also have to know who you are voting for and what each candidate stands for. It's a new step in life to be able to have a say in what goes on in our government."

In order to vote, citizens must be 18 years old and

have registered at least 30 days prior to any given election. Registration applications are available at the county courthouse.

Registered voters must also present a valid picture identification when voting, which can be a driver's license, passport, or any other official identification card that has a picture.

Some seniors were 18 by the primary election day but either failed to register in time or had not turned 18 at least 30 days before the election.

"I wish I had registered in time so I could have participated like other seniors in the primary election," senior Newt Koemel said. "My birthday is on Dec. 19, so I could have registered, but I had stuff of higher priority at the time."

Senior Curry Wilson turned 18 years old last September but had not registered.

"It never occurred to me to register, but I wish I had so I could have a say," Wilson said. "I'm realizing that my voice is important. I'm going to make sure to register in time for the General Election in November."

Masters noted that he registered to vote at the same time he renewed his driver's

SEE "VOTING" Pg. 8

UIL, One Act advance past district



Natalie Hayner (left to right), Henry Kelly, Sydney Key, and Braden Davis rehearse a scene from "The Arkansaw Bear". The One Act Play cast and crew performed at district on March 22 and advanced to the bi-district competition that was held on April 2. Results from this competition were not available at press time. PHOTO BY NOLAN DAVIS

Large number of students to compete at next round

BY NOLAN DAVIS
Staff Writer

One Act Play and UIL competed in district contests two weeks ago, with both earning success and advancing to the next round.

This is the first time in several years that the OAP has advanced past the district level, and it is also the largest group of UIL Academics students going to regional competition in quite some time.

One Act Play performed the show "The Arkansaw Bear" at the district competition in Stamford on March 22, becoming one of three plays to advance to

SEE "UIL" Pg. 8

Students, teachers see rise in cheating

Cheating can lead to educational decline

BY RYLIE SCOTT
News Editor

As the year comes down to the final six weeks, an increase in cheating among students is typically reported by teachers and faculty.

Principal Kevin Hill has recognized this growing problem throughout the high school and junior high campuses.

"When it comes to tests, I don't think cheating is very rampant," Hill said. "I have noticed there is often help on homework and those sorts of things."

Counselor Dee Dee Waggoner has also observed the same pattern.

"We have a problem here in Albany," Waggoner said.

"It's hard to notice exactly how much cheating goes on when you're not in a classroom, but I do see a lot of collaboration in the hallways which students may not consider cheating. Working together without having permission to do so is cheating."

Cheating has different definitions not only in the dictionary, but also among students and teachers.

"I think I define cheating differently than most people," science teacher Andre Raymond said. "Cheating is doing something the way you're not instructed to do it. If you're supposed to do your work on your own, but you check answers with someone else, you are cheating. If you are supposed to be using your textbook to obtain answers, and you use a different resource, you are cheating as well."

Raymond explains how having a specific definition of cheating is crucial.

"Because of my defini-

tion of cheating, I see a lot of it that goes on," Raymond said. "If you ask the average student if checking answers is considered cheating, they're not going to admit that it is. If you don't have a set definition, then it is a very gray area instead of being black or white."

From her standpoint as a counselor, Waggoner has seen the detrimental effects of cheating on students.

"Cheating always comes back to haunt students," Waggoner said. "It hurts them in the long run when they haven't learned the curriculum they need. While their GPA looks great, their scores on standardized tests such as the ACT or SAT are very poor because they never learned any of the material themselves."

One major concern about the rapid increase in cheating is how it affects class rank for students, especially the ones who don't participate in cheating.

"The people who cheat



A high school student uses a classmate's work to fill in their forgotten homework assignment. Cheating has become a big problem among students. PHOTO BY RYLIE SCOTT

will usually always get the answers correct," sophomore Kyle Manning said. "It's not fair because their rank will increase, yet they haven't really done the work."

Raymond added that students who don't really learn content are ultimately cheating themselves.

"I have observed a de-

crease in knowledge," Raymond said. "Students learn material for the test and then forget it, which cheats them later in the educational process."

Cheating occurs for a variety of reasons.

"Students cheat out of laziness and procrastination,"

SEE "CHEATING" Pg. 8

Editorials

Social media posts matter

Today, if you were to look at almost any teenager's cellphone, you would find Instagram, Facebook, Vine, Twitter, Snapchat, and other social media apps. Social media has become a fun way for students to express themselves through pictures, posts, and comments. However, what most people don't realize is that what they post on these sites could have a significant impact on their lives in the future.

Social media posts say a lot about a person and can make a difference with friends, colleges, and future employers.

Many people post pictures and comments for all of their "followers" to see without thinking about what kind of message they are portraying. Often, a person's Instagram profile or tweets is all someone sees of them, so whatever message this sends is the only message many followers will receive.

Colleges have also begun to look at students' social media profiles. Posts send a message to universities that shows what kind of student a teenager is likely to be and what kind of impact they might have on campus. Profiles filled with partying and alcohol could cause a college to deny acceptance.

Finally, many businesses also look at social media profiles when hiring employees. Inappropriate posts send red flags that could cause a business not to hire certain applicants.

Many people say that what they post on social media doesn't matter that much because people know what they are really like, but sometimes this is the only glimpse you see of a person.

Often, students don't think twice about what they post on Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and Facebook. However, social media posts matter and can have a big impact.

Opportunities for involvement

Athletics are a huge part of this high school and make up the majority of extracurricular activities. Although this is the case, there are other ways for students to become involved on campus.

Another way is to compete in events through academic UIL, One Act Play, and agriculture competitions. Here students have a chance to represent the school and be a part of a different kind of team. All students are welcome to try out for One Act Play and compete in UIL and Ag competitions. Those are great ways to become involved.

Another way to play a role on campus is to be in a leadership position. Participating in Student Council or being a class officer is a great way to make a difference at school. Students represent their class and other students to make changes and organize activities.

Students can also take electives. Classes such as band, family and consumer sciences, newspaper, and yearbook are available. This allows students to become involved without having to spend very much time outside of the school day. Therefore, students with after school jobs are still able to participate.

Many students say that there is no way to become involved other than athletics, but this is not the case. There is a variety of organizations and activities that students can be a part of at school.

It is important to be involved. Everyone should be a part of something. It makes this experience much more meaningful.



Academic, athletic equality

There are quite a few things that I truly feel are greatly underappreciated-academics being the biggest. Excuse me if I'm wrong, but I honestly feel that our community is unintentionally careless about recognizing the achievements of students who aren't necessarily the "star athletes" or even athletes at all.

I'm not judging anyone, because I am the exact same way sometimes.

I will drive six hours to Houston to watch our football team play for the state title, but if I were asked to get up at 6:00 a.m. on a Saturday to go to the UIL competition in Abilene, I would most likely oblige, but I wouldn't be happy about it, and I know I'm not the only one who feels that way.

I feel like it's extremely unfair to those who give their time and effort to study and work hard to compete to the best of their abilities, only to be overlooked because they might not be scoring the winning touchdown or pitching a no hitter. Their roles in our school system and community are just as important as any other.

Recently, the largest number of students that our school has had in quite a while advanced to the regional academic UIL meet, but I highly doubt there will be a police escorted send-off for them as they leave to compete in Odessa.

If we can lose our voices cheering on the volleyball team and the baseball players, then the least we can

do is be excited for the gold medalist in computer science, or the best actor at the One Act Play competition, or the newspaper staff that has been given

awards at a state-wide competition consecutively for 10 years.

Everyone likes to feel appreciated for their hard work, especially when they excel at something that they love to do. So my advice for everyone, whether you be back row on the volleyball court, third base, quarterback, drum major, or understudy, work hard and stay focused regardless of who is paying attention and you will always be a success.



GARDNER SEEDS
by KYLEA GARDNER

Nothing more than a crown

Friday night-lights, high school football, and stands filled with fans. All three of these ingredients make for the perfect homecoming in Albany, Texas. Everybody cheering the Albany Lions on to victory until the final countdown at halftime.

I was lucky enough to be out on the field with three other girls in pretty dresses. As the tensions rise on the field, my name was called. "What?," I said to myself. "Did that just happen?"

I went to receive the crown, and I was very honored to have won. But if I have to be honest, it was just a crown to me. I know that some girls want to be homecoming queen more than anything, but the truth is that it's just high school, and a crown doesn't define your future. Sure it's nice to win and to say that you won, but everybody will forget who won by the next year.

High school honors should not be what people

remember you by or the high point of your life. People should remember you by the impact you made in his or her life, and that doesn't come from a crown and sash.

My mother has a way of always bringing me back to reality and tells me that if I do not win an event that it is not the end of the world and that high school is just a small part of my life. I look at situations like this with the attitude of "if I make it, I make it, and if I don't, I don't." I say that to myself before every cheer tryout, every nomination, or contest that I am nominated or tryout for.

All in all, people should not allow homecoming queen or anything that involves voting to affect their perspective of themselves or how they think. Winning homecoming queen was an honor, but I know that I'm better than just a crown and that high school won't last forever.



REDHEADED RANTS
by CURRY WILSON



THE LIONS ROAR
ILPC 2014 Gold Star Winner
ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL

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March Madness attracts many

A major sporting event was televised on four major networks last year, as well as numerous local channels. The college men's basketball NCAA tournament had an average viewership of 11.3 million last year, the most ever in NCAA history. So what is it that makes these few weeks so popular?

I believe it is more than just the chance to fill out a perfect ESPN bracket and win large amounts of cash.

I believe it is also more than just the fanatic fans cheering for their alma mater, or the occasional sports fan flipping through the games. As cheesy as it sounds, I believe viewers are drawn to the pure excitement of the tournament. Think about it: you have some of the best athletes and basketball players in the world all competing for the championship over the course of about a month.

In the tournament, anything can happen, and the unknown is always exciting. One team could come out on fire, and then the next night they could be cold as ice. All the excitement that comes from the football or baseball playoffs happens in the short span of four weeks with games every day. But in basketball 64 teams

earn a spot, making it nearly impossible to predict any of the rounds, let alone the first. Just this year in 2016, there were thirteen upsets in the first round out of thirty-two games. However, even with these upset numbers, a 16- seed has never defeated a number one seed in the first round. Although, low seeds are getting a lot more fun to watch. In the past few years, lower seeds are making it farther and farther into the tournament.

Another aspect of the tournament is that every year there is an underdog, a Cinderella upset story. Some small university upsets a big dog and everyone hops on the wagon to cheer for them. The upsets stem from the mindset of smaller schools that they are there to win, not just to play. Rutgers coach Steve Danley once said, "They call it 'March Madness,' not just March Playoffs. We're ready to go and we are excited to play. They may have a lot of talent, but we do too."

Not only is the tournament exciting for those with direct ties to the teams in it; I believe it provides some of the most exciting and unpredictable events of all sports every year. March Madness will remain a major sporting spectacle for all time.



MIKE'S MOMENTS
by MICHAEL COTTER

2¢ worth Who do you think should be president?

"I want Ted Cruz to be president because he knows what he's doing."

Braden Davis
Freshman

"Bernie Sanders, I like his education plan."

Natalie Hayner
Sophomore

"I think Bernie Sanders should be president because he has views that help everyone, and he supports individualism."

Ryan Phillips
Junior

"I want Donald Trump to be president because he has good hair."

Kaylynn Voyles
Senior

Teens show off musical abilities

Students share instrumental talents

BY HENRY KELLY
Entertainment Editor

While many students are born with talents, other students have to learn to play an instrument to find their true talent.

Everyone has to start somewhere, and freshman Jillian Guinn chose to learn from someone close to her. She plays the fiddle.

"My mom taught me how to play," Guinn said. "But I used to play with my grandfather a lot before he passed away."

Guinn finds that when she plays, it has a special meaning.

"I enjoy playing the fiddle," Guinn said. "It reminds of how much fun I had playing with my grandfather."

Guinn also finds competitions an important part of playing an instrument.

"I compete at the Red Steagall contest every year," Guinn said. "Everyone meets at the Stockyards for the competition."

Like Guinn, senior Michael Cotter also plays in competitions. He also plays the violin, as well as the guitar and piano.

"I used to play in violin and fiddle contests," Cotter said. "And I even placed among top competitors in the field contests."

Cotter found a venue to showcase his talent.

"When I was 10, I played my violin in the Fandangle," Cotter said. "My sisters played alongside me."

Both Guinn and Cotter began playing at a very young age.

"I started playing violin when I was only two," Cotter said. "I was about 8 when I began playing the piano."

It wasn't until Cotter got older that he began to take up guitar.

"Playing guitar was an easy transition from violin," Cotter said. "Luckily, violin music and



Sophomores Harvey Hinkle (left) and Caleb Roach pause to look over a piece of music while they rehearse at the Feed Store. Hinkle's family has played a big part in his learning to play the mandolin, while Roach has taught himself to play the guitar. PHOTO BY HENRY KELLY

knowing the strings helped me a lot as I began to learn guitar."

Cotter currently plays the guitar at Young Life. Playing alongside him is sophomore Caleb Roach.

"I play the electric guitar," Roach said. "I really enjoy it. I like to learn new music and songs to play."

Roach taught himself how to play his instrument.

"I used YouTube and guitar books to learn," Roach said. "It took me a little while to really start playing."

While many students struggle to find time in the week to practice, Roach set aside time out of every day to work on his music.

"I practice 30 minutes every day," Roach said. "I practice music and perfect the songs I like to play."

Sophomore Elise Brown also practices every day. She plays the piano.

"Piano is fun to play," Brown said. "It is something I used to do

with my grandma, so it is special to me."

She won't be playing alone for long.

"I'm going to start playing with a band," Brown said. "We will be playing at the Aztec Theater a lot."

Like Brown, sophomore Harvey Hinkle also has a connection with a band. He plays the mandolin.

"My extended family travels around the country playing instruments and singing," Hinkle said. "They call themselves the Hinkle Family Quartet."

Hinkle has a closer connection to this quartet though.

"My mom, dad, brother, and I have also traveled around with the family," Hinkle said. "My dad would play with the quartet while my brother, mom, and I would travel with him."

His father and uncle play a wide variety of instruments which adds to the uniqueness of the family band.

"My father plays banjo, har-

monica, guitar, and bass fiddle," Hinkle said. "My uncle plays even more than that."

Hinkle said the group makes money from love offerings taken during performances at churches.

Hinkle's immediate family had to leave the group.

"Our family stopped going around the country when my mother was pregnant with my sister," Hinkle said. "We stopped in Florida and ended up settling there for a while before coming to Texas."

Hinkle said he and his father still find time to play with the group occasionally.

"When they come into town, I play with them," Hinkle said. "Now my brother and sister want to learn so they can play also."

Being part of the Hinkle family means learning to play instruments.

"When I was younger, everyone else could play but me," Hinkle said. "I wanted to be able to play with them, so my uncle

taught me the mandolin."

Hinkle usually checks his Snapchat to determine where the family quartet is playing on any given day. Currently, the group is in South Carolina.

"The last state we went to with them was Colorado," Hinkle said. "We went to nursing homes to play for people there."

Hinkle is not as determined to practice as he once was.

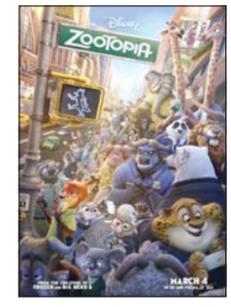
"I don't ever really practice anymore," Hinkle said. "I just pick it up and play it once in a while."

Like Hinkle, Cotter practices much less than he used to.

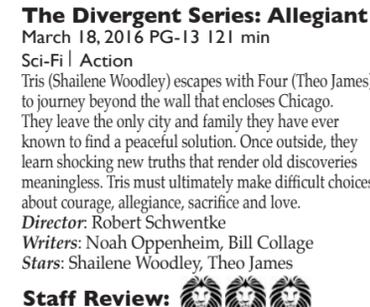
"When I was younger I played violin every day," Cotter said. "Now, I'm playing guitar and I only practice a couple times a week."

Though his practices have lessened, his love for the ability to play has not.

"I still really like being able to control the instrument," Cotter said. "I get to make music for people to enjoy."



Zootopia
March 4, 2016 PG 108 min
Action | Adventure
When Judy Hopps (Ginnifer Goodwin) becomes the first rabbit to join the police force, she quickly learns how tough it is to enforce the law. Determined to prove herself, Judy jumps at the opportunity to solve a mysterious case. Unfortunately, that means working with Nick Wilde (Jason Bateman), a wily fox who makes her job even harder.
Directors: Bryon Howard, Rich Moore, Jared Bush
Writers: Jared Bush
Stars: Ginnifer Goodwin, Jason Bateman
Staff Review: [Lion icons]



The Divergent Series: Allegiant
March 18, 2016 PG-13 121 min
Sci-Fi | Action
Tris (Shailene Woodley) escapes with Four (Theo James) to journey beyond the wall that encloses Chicago. They leave the only city and family they have ever known to find a peaceful solution. Once outside, they learn shocking new truths that render old discoveries meaningless. Tris must ultimately make difficult choices about courage, allegiance, sacrifice and love.
Director: Robert Schwentke
Writers: Noah Oppenheim, Bill Collage
Stars: Shailene Woodley, Theo James
Staff Review: [Lion icons]



Risen
February 19, 2016 PG 107 min
Drama
Roman military tribune Clavius (Joseph Fiennes) has served 25 years in the army. He arrives at a crossroad when he's told to investigate what happened to Jesus (Cliff Curtis) following the Crucifixion. Accompanied by trusted aide Lucius (Tom Felton), his quest to disprove rumors of a risen Messiah makes him question his own beliefs. As his journey takes him to new places, Clavius discovers the truth that he's been seeking.
Director: Kevin Reynolds
Stars: Joseph Fiennes, Tom Felton, Cliff Curtis
Writers: Paul Aiello
Staff Review: [Lion icons]



10 Cloverfield Lane
March 11, 2016 PG-13 106 min
Fantasy | Mystery
After surviving a car accident, Michelle finds herself in an underground bunker with two men. A chemical attack has rendered the air unbreathable, and their only hope of survival is to remain inside. However, Howard's controlling nature makes Michelle want to escape. After taking matters into her own hands, the young woman discovers the truth about the world.
Director: Dan Trachtenberg
Writers: Drew Goddard, Daniel Casey
Stars: Mary Elizabeth Winstead, John Goodman
Staff Review: [Lion icons]

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

BY HENRY KELLY

Spotlight

After receiving Best Motion Picture this year, I felt the need to watch *Spotlight*, and it is safe to say that the film earned the award.

It also won the award for Best Original Screenplay.

Based on true events, the movie follows a group of Boston Globe reporters investigating the claims of child abuse by priests in Boston.

Each actor in the film puts passion into their work. By this I mean, as the characters feel an emotional connection to their investigations, the actors do a great job of showing how much this story means to the characters. These actors include Mark Ruffalo, Rachel McAdams, Michael Keaton, Brian d'Arcy James, and Liev Schreiber.

Because the film is based on true events, it requires an even greater awareness of the characters by the actors. The film also shows how hard these journalists worked to find information and how this information grows to become a bigger scandal than they ever imagined.

Although all of the aspects of the film are very well done, I don't think it was solely the cast, directing, soundtrack, or even the storyline that made this film great, but simply the combination of all of these and how well they worked together.

A fair warning, this film is rated R. With that aside, the film is very well done and I recommend it to anyone

looking for a top notch movie to see.

I believe that this film did deserve Best Motion Picture as well as Best Original Screenplay. It is written not only to inform the viewer of an important happening in society, but maybe a problem that still exists.

It is an accurate account of the power of good investigative reporting.



The Revenant

Starring Best Actor Leonardo DiCaprio, *The Revenant* is a must-see for movie goers.

Set in 1823, frontiersman Hugh Glass is left to die and must fight for survival in this deadly journey for revenge.

The movie's crew also won two other awards. Alejandro González Iñárritu received Best Director for his work in *The Revenant*, and the movie also received Best Cinematography which was led by Emmanuel Lubezki.

The setting takes place in the mountains of Montana and South Dakota. Though the setting may have been beautiful, it did not take away from the intense scenes that

take place throughout the movie.

The film is one of the most realistic movies out on the screens. One example is when Hugh Glass is confronted by a bear. Unlike how most movies would go, he is attacked and the bear practically rips him apart, leaving him to die. The movie contains many other scenes that seem very real.

Glass is fueled by vengeance as his fellow frontiersman John Fitzgerald (Tom Hardy) leaves him to die. Hardy does a great job playing the antagonist as he practically made me hate him as I watched the movie. He was nominated for Best Supporting Actor.

The film was also nominated for best Makeup with its many realistic looking injuries.

The film topped out with 12 nominations at the Oscars. Although it did not win Best Motion Picture, it still ended up winning three awards.

The cast and crew both did a great job on this film, making an entertaining picture that everyone should see.



Students share gospel in Africa

Local group makes spring break trip to Uganda

BY NEWT KOEMEL
Staff Writer

When most Christians think of church, they think about waking up early on a Sunday morning and dressing in their nicest clothes.

They drive to the church building, beautiful and decorative with stained glass and breath-taking architecture, and walk into the climate-controlled sanctuary.

They converse with other members of the congregation, listen to the preacher's sermon, and go home to a Sunday lunch and an afternoon nap.

To some Christians, however, church means so much more. It means spreading the Gospel and leading others towards God. Two local students did just that and traveled to Kisoro, Uganda in Africa to teach people about the Bible during spring break.

Junior Michaela Reames has always wanted to be a part of a mission trip and felt like God was sending her to Uganda.

"Thomas Aly texted me one day and told me to pray about going to Uganda," Reames said. "I prayed about it that night and the next day, and my Bible study was over Matthew 28:19-20, where God tells us to 'go and make disciples of all nations.' I felt like God was commanding me to go to Africa, so I listened to Him and followed Him."

The trip was youth pastor Thomas Aly's eighth mission trip to Africa, but he says that this one was special.

"I would say this time around was different because



we worked with a pastor that is similar to a modern-day Paul," Aly said. "He was saved in a bar, and since 1985 has started 26 churches in the Kisoro district."

While on the mission, the eight people from First Baptist of Albany visited elementary schools in the community with the pastor to talk to children about God.

"We spent time with the children and shared the gospel with them by showing them the Evangelical, reading and memorizing Bible verses, and praising Jesus with the songs they would sing to us," Reames said.

Junior Rachel Hill also enjoyed teaching young children about Christ.

"I love spending time with kids, so being in the schools was the highlight of my time

there," Hill said. "They had such beautiful smiles. It is so hard to explain to people who couldn't see for themselves. The joy they contain is from God only."

Reames tells of a God-created experience that the group had while in Uganda.

"My favorite part of the trip was the day our group went hiking," Reames said. "It was a beautiful, ordinary day, and we thought it would be a day to bond with each other and have fun. But as we were walking to the hills, kids from the slums ran to us and grabbed our hands and led us to the hills."

The group took the opportunity the children gave them to share the Word.

"We found a cross at the top of one of the hills that overlooked the entire town of Kisoro," Reames said. "I read



Juniors Rachel Hill and Michaela Reames (top) pose with a few village children after a three-hour hike through the hilly terrain of Kisoro, Uganda. Hill (left) introduces herself to an 11-year-old student that she met at a local school. The two students spent ten days in Africa working in schools and churches in hopes of sharing the gospel with the Ugandans. Both hope to continue work in the mission field. PHOTOS PROVIDED

a chapter from the Bible to the children. These children showed us unconditional love."

Reames believes that it was God's will that those children hiked with the group.

"That wasn't a coincidence that these children happened to find us and follow us on a hike," Reames said. "God planned for us to meet, and He opened up an opportunity to share the gospel with them and show them love."

The youth leader explained how going on mission trips helps strengthen his own faith.

"I have grown in my Christian faith through foreign missions by seeing how big our God is," Aly said. "It amazes me every year how God uses us when we are least expecting it. I was called into ministry on the mission field, so it has

a big place in my heart and in my life."

This mission trip helped Reames to see just how much is taken for granted.

"I saw things that brought me to my knees and opened my eyes to see how grateful I should be," Reames said. "The people in Uganda have so much more than us, because of their relationship with God. I always need God, but I needed Him so much more on this trip."

The trip helped Hill to see how much work God does that goes unseen.

"I now have a different perspective of how big God is," Hill said. "The things he provides for those people who have nothing showed me that he is capable of so much more than what we sometimes give Him credit for."

New students make friends, adjustments

New kids discuss challenges of switching schools

BY KYLEA GARDNER
Assistant Editor

Regardless of whether it be adjusting to a new house, job, or school, new experiences can sometimes be hard to deal with. Although, everyone experiences change in different ways, some deal with it better than others.

Sophomore Brennan Abbate previously attended Wylie High School in Abilene before transferring here at the beginning of the school year.

"It was really hard for me to transition from my old school to Albany at first because I missed my old friends," Abbate said. "It wasn't too bad, though. Playing football helped me make new friends, and it made the transition much easier."

Much like Abbate, sophomore Madison Russell also transferred to AHS early in the school year.

"I moved here from Panther Creek, a small six-man school 20 miles from Coleman," Russell said. "My family and I moved here because my step-dad got a new job on a ranch not far from Lueders."

Junior Logan Lloyd had a hard time adjusting at first.

"I came from Wylie High School which is a 4A school, so the change was hard at first," Lloyd said. "I wasn't used to a small school."

Caleb Partin, another sophomore, transferred here from a small school as well.

"My brothers and I moved here from Cross Plains," Partin said. "We moved because my dad got a job offer in this area."

Russell explained that while the transition was challenging, it was also a good change.

"The academic level is more complicated and was hard for me to adjust to," Russell said. "The sports are also more challenging,

but who doesn't like a good challenge?"

The change was easy for Partin. "It wasn't hard for me to transition at all," Partin said. "It was really easy for me to make friends here. Everyone is easy to get along with."

When asked what they liked about the school, it wasn't hard for the new students to share positive opinions.

"I like the small-town atmosphere that there is in Albany," Abbate said. "I also feel like teachers here care a lot more than at my old school."

Lloyd also felt that Albany was better than her previous school.

"I like Albany a lot better than Wylie now," Lloyd said. "It's a lot more calm here and there isn't near as much drama as there was there."

Partin enjoys the athletic system the most.

"My favorite thing about Albany is the sports," Partin said. "We actually win games here."

Russell said that the atmosphere and people are what makes her enjoy being here.

"It seems like Albany is more spirited, and the people here make the most of what they are given," Russell said.

Partin felt that the academics here are harder than in Cross Plains, and Abbate feels the same.

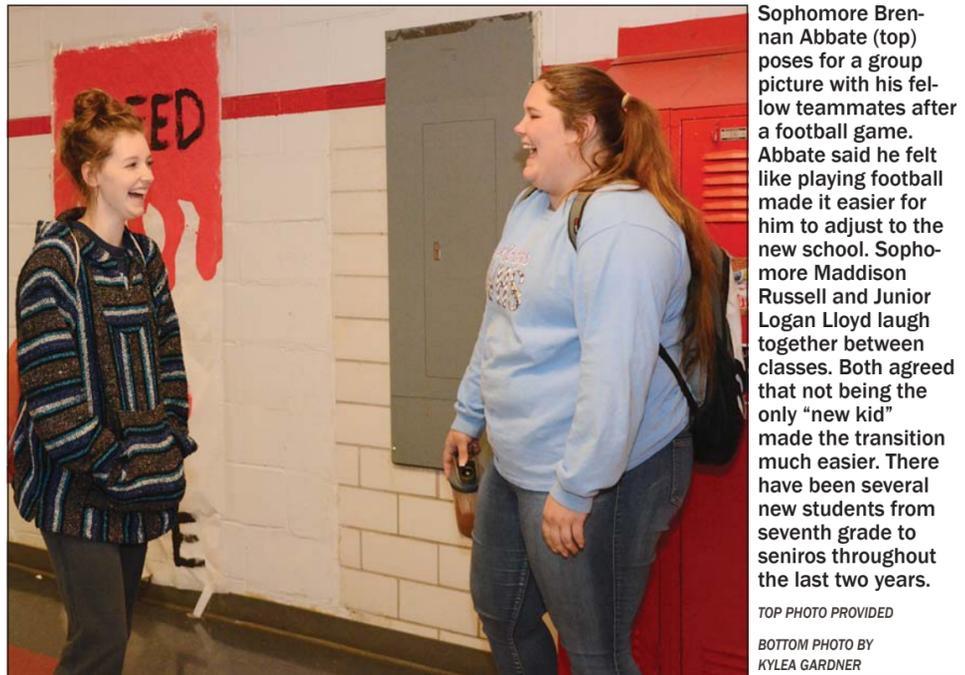
"Academics here are harder because, like I said before, the teachers care more about our grades," Abbate said. "I think teachers can teach more material in a less amount of time because there aren't as many students."

As for Lloyd, her opinion was the opposite.

"I feel like the academics at my old school were a lot harder because it's a lot bigger and more advanced," Lloyd said. "Wylie pushed us to get ahead in our classes more than they do here."

Russell had a positive outlook towards the students and teachers here.

"The teachers and students here are much easier to get along with," Russell said. "The teachers



Sophomore Brennan Abbate (top) poses for a group picture with his fellow teammates after a football game. Abbate said he felt like playing football made it easier for him to adjust to the new school. Sophomore Madison Russell and Junior Logan Lloyd laugh together between classes. Both agreed that not being the only "new kid" made the transition much easier. There have been several new students from seventh grade to seniors throughout the last two years.

TOP PHOTO PROVIDED

BOTTOM PHOTO BY
KYLEA GARDNER

are more helpful and attentive to the needs of their students than where I came from."

Russell had mixed emotions in regards to whether she liked Albany or Panther Creek more.

"It's a tough question to an-

swer," Russell said. "I'd like to say I enjoyed my time at Panther Creek, but Albany was a good change for me. Albany pushes me to be a better student and a better athlete. The presence of God in this school is also noticed and

appreciated."

As they continue in their school year and begin to look forward to the years to come, all agreed that being in the community of Albany and being involved in school activities has been a positive change.

Students join political debate

Future voters
voice opinions
over candidates

BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD
Features Editor

This fall, many high school seniors and recent graduates will, for the very first time, enter a small curtained booth and vote for the next President of the United States.

Some will follow in their parents' footsteps. Some will deliberately rebel against prevailing political customs. Some will even choose their candidate based on an online quiz.

Regardless of how students choose their candidates, this election day is one eligible students will not soon forget.

On Nov. 8, they'll finally get their say in the way America should be governed.

Junior Ryan Phillips says he particularly favors Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders.

"I like Sanders because although people don't think it's a good idea to raise taxes, only the wealthiest people will be significantly taxed," Phillips said. "Even after their taxes are raised, richer people will still be well-off."

According to Phillips, at that point, benefits of Sanders' socialistic plan will outweigh the drawbacks.

"Everyone will receive free health care and it will really help out the middle and lower classes," Phillips said. "It's unselfish."

Senior Cason Asher, who says he identifies as conservative, disagrees.

"I think that raising taxes for richer people is only going to cause more problems," Asher said. "Richer people aren't going to be okay with having money taken away from them, and they will most likely just raise their business's prices if that happens, so the little guys will just end up hurt anyway."

Asher is unsure about which candidate he would like to become America's next President, but is

leaning towards Texas Senator Ted Cruz.

"I just know there's no way I'll ever vote for Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump," Asher said.

Phillips shares similar views. "Hillary Clinton has some of the same ideas as Sanders, but she doesn't seem responsible or truthful enough to be President," Phillips said. "And Donald Trump is just a comedian."

Senior Savannah Perez says that although she was initially interested in republican candidate Donald Trump, she now supports Senator Cruz.

"At first, I thought Trump would be good because of his business experience," she said. "But after recent events, I see how problematic he can be, and now I'm not so sure he's the best man for the job. I like that Cruz knows exactly how he wants to fix America's issues and doesn't waste time bickering with the other candidates."

Perez and Asher say they side with their parents' political values.

"My parents obviously have a lot of influence on my stance, but I've also tried to keep myself unbiased and look at the facts straight on," Asher said.

Phillips found his political identity in a less conventional way.

"I took an online quiz at www.isidewith.com to get a better idea of who I should vote for and was surprised at how similar my values were to those of the Democratic candidates," Phillips said. "I had hardly known anything about them because the area I live in is so conservative. I think many other people should also try to have a more informed voting decision."

Phillips says American citizens should have more freedom in their lives when it comes to doing things that "don't hurt anybody else."

"For example, I feel like gay marriage should be legal because it harms no one," Phillips said. "People may argue that it's against the Bible for people of the same sex to get married, but America's government shouldn't have to adhere to the values of a single religion. Bernie Sanders has supported gay marriage since the 1980's."



Junior Ryan Phillips (left) and Senior Cason Asher (right) pose to represent the political candidate they are supporting. Phillips is in support of Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders, and Asher sides with Republican Ted Cruz. PHOTO BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD

Phillips also supports Sanders' plan to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour nationwide.

"The current minimum of \$7.25 per hour isn't enough to live on, and some people are in a situation where they're either financially incapable of going to college or mentally disabled," Phillips said. "Those people will have to work minimum wage jobs for the rest of their lives, and where the minimum wage currently stands, their lives will basically only consist of eating, sleeping and working."

Conversely, Asher says raising the minimum wage, like raising taxes, would only inflate the U.S. dollar and cause businesses to increase their prices.

"Also, there shouldn't be any more gun control than there already is," Asher said. "I understand that background checks are important, but making it harder to get a gun won't fix anything. If someone is determined to kill people, they're probably determined enough to get a gun in some kind of shady way."

Perez agrees. "If we were to lose the right to legally own guns, people will still

manage to get their hands on them somehow," she said. "Then those people will put everyone else, who are now defenseless, in danger."

Phillips argues that too many Americans can't be trusted with firearms, and says he thinks Sanders' plan to strengthen and better enforce the instant background check system is right on target.

"I know about the second amendment, but that was instated during a time in which you had to have a gun in order to protect yourself," Phillips said. "Guns aren't as needed anymore. Now, they're carelessly misused by the public."

Asher says this November's election will be "very interesting."

"A lot of kids don't pay attention to politics and only look at the benefits that a candidate talks about without doing a background check or anything," Asher said. "If enough young people think like that, we'll likely end up with an unreliable President."

Phillips also feels that the upcoming generation of voters will have a great impact on the polls.

"My age group will probably be more focused on the economy

and individual freedoms than generations of the past," he said. "More than anything, I think this next wave of voters will work to pin-point and get rid of social issues."

He says that with the growth of the Internet, young people have made the world a much more social place.

"I think we'd all just like to focus on retaining our individualities, working for social equality, and making America a safer place to live," Phillips said. "Sanders' plan appeals to young people because he wants to make all of these things possible."

When asked to describe what he hopes America will be like in the future, Phillips said he would like to see every citizen healthy and safe.

"Nobody should have to struggle to survive," Phillips said. "Healthcare should be free, and everybody should be okay with sharing their income for the greater good; that's what Bernie's socialistic plan is all about. I'd be okay with the government taking some control over the people if it meant we'd all live more stable lives."

Band takes trip over spring break

Students find
adventure close
to home

BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD
Features Editor

Two years ago, the Ragin' Red Band and director John Stockdale journeyed to New Orleans to explore the city's culture and perform at The National WWII Museum.

On the trip, band members could be found swamp-touring, conversing with street-performers painted to look like robots, and standing on each other's shoulders, reaching for strands of colorful beads dangling from embellished trees in the French Quarter.

"Sure, we didn't go somewhere as far as New Orleans this year, but I think we had just as much fun," junior Drum Major Sydney Key said.

This spring break, the band travelled to the Dallas/Fort Worth area for their biennial trip. There, they visited Texas Wesleyan University for a special practice session, Great Wolf Lodge, and Urban Air Trampoline Park over a period of three days.

"We started off at Texas Wesleyan University where we played our pieces for the college band director," Key said. "She helped us clean up our music for contest. Her methods were a little crazy, like rearranging the entire band so that we'd hear the music differently, but they worked."

Junior Ryan Phillips agrees.

"She really helped us perfect our music," Phillips said. "After lunch, we returned to their auditorium and played part of our concert for the college band, and then they played some music they were working on. They proved to us how impressive a small band could be."

Key says she was inspired as well.

"Their band was even smaller than ours," she said. "They only had one or two of each instrument, but they still played like they were a full band."



Freshman Ryan Hill (top) plays his trombone during the band's performance at Texas Wesleyan University. The band played their pieces for the college's band director, and then listened to the University's band play. McKenna Thompson, Sydney Key, and Matthew Rupp (left) play a game in the arcade at the Great Wolf Lodge. The band traveled to Grapevine over spring break for their biennial trip. PHOTOS BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD

Lodge in Grapevine, Texas: an indoor water park resort packed with other family-friendly attractions, such as the massive Northern Lights Arcade.

"It was my first time going there, and it was humongous," Phillips said.

However, by the time the band arrived at the lodge and ate, Thompson said curfew was almost already in effect.

"So we all went to bed, and most of us went to the water park early the next morning," Thompson said.

Great Wolf Lodge's 78,000 square foot water park houses a wave pool, a lazy river, and five large water slides, including The Tornado, a 40-foot drop into a water-jet-fueled vortex.

"The number of different things

you could do at the lodge was overwhelming, but in a good way," Phillips said.

Thompson and Key claim going to the water park was their favorite thing about the trip.

"I really enjoyed the bonding that occurred between classmates," Key said.

That afternoon, the band ventured to Urban Air Trampoline Park in Southlake.

"It was an entire building filled with trampolines," Key said. "There was also an obstacle course and a dodge ball arena. It was super fun but really exhausting."

Phillips claims going to the trampoline park was the highlight of the trip for him.

"It was the most exercise I've gotten in months," he said.

Phillips tried out a variety of games at the venue.

"But when I went to play dodge ball for a little bit, Jake Green threw a ball that hit me so hard in the face that I had to sit down with my hands over my eyes for 20 minutes," Phillips said.

Even so, Phillips said the experience was still enjoyable.

"Besides that incident, nobody was hurt," he said.

The next morning, several band members, including Thompson, left the lodge at 9:00 in order to compete in a track meet that day, while the rest of the band left later that morning.

"All in all, taking that trip was most beneficial in that the band is now better prepared to go to contest in April," Phillips said.

According to Phillips, working with the college students and director "really pinpointed the problems within the band's playing."

"The band director there taught us to play with more passion and articulation," he said.

Key said even after hearing rumors about traveling to Hawaii, New York, or Colorado at the beginning of the year, she is content with what the band gained from this year's trip.

"If Stockdale takes the band to Hawaii now that I'm never going to have another band trip, I will die and then haunt him," Key said.

Johnston leaves long coaching legacy

Albany coach to retire at end of school year

BY RACHEL HILL
Copy Editor

Over twenty years of hanging jerseys, washing workout clothes and drawing plays will now be replaced with grandkids, preaching and travel. The normal routine of a coaching life will no longer be associated with Paul Johnston, even though the title of Coach Johnston will most likely never change.

"I'm not sure exactly what the future holds, but I know I will spend a lot of time with my grandkids and my wife," head girls' basketball coach Paul Johnston said. "I absolutely love preaching every other Sunday and travelling around."

Fresh out of college at Howard Payne University and looking for a coaching job, Johnston started his coaching career in Clyde.

"I took the first job I could find," Johnston said. "In the fall of 1980, Coach Taylor at Clyde interviewed me for the junior high basketball job."

Johnston coached in that position for two years, then took a football position, still in Clyde, for one year and finally finished his time there with girls' basketball.

"Coach Taylor moved to Oklahoma City and called me to ask if I wanted to help him up there," Johnston said. "Taylor was a great guy who I always saw as my mentor, so my wife, Danita, and I moved up there for two years."

Johnston's wife had a business degree but wanted to get into teaching, spurring another move.

"While my wife went to school, I coached at Spring Lake for two years," Johnston said. "I hated it. I hate storms, and the weather up there was always full of them."

One last move allowed the family to finally call somewhere home.

"After Danita got her degree, my mom said I needed to find a job around the Abilene and Comanche area," Johnston said. "She would move by us and the grandkids while Danita would be closer to her family. I applied for several openings, and eventually Coach Faith hired me as the defensive coordinator in the fall of 1988."

Most coaches don't stay in one place for very long, and Johnston thought the same would be true for the new job in Albany.

"I told Danita not to unpack anything we didn't need because we wouldn't be here long," Johnston said. "I loved Albany and thought it was a great town, but being a coach means you move around a lot. I knew I wanted to coach girls' basketball, and even though the position wasn't open yet, I already loved Albany so I decided to stay."

Johnston coached 23 years of girls' basketball in all, 20 of those being at Albany, posting a career win-loss record of 419-283.

"I fell in love with the coaches and kids here," Johnston said. "I have been so blessed to be able to raise a family and make this our home."

During his years here, Johnston made sure the kids knew he loved them and Christ.

"CJ (Coach Johnston) taught me to be a better Christian, and he constantly helped me grow in my faith," sophomore Chloe Fields said.

Johnston left his players with many memories.

"He coached me all four years," senior Curry Wilson said. "He focused more on character and the aspect of being a Lady Lion rather than winning."

Johnston says that the records will fade, but the memories of the time spent there and the lives touched never will.

"I am really going to miss helping young boys and girls grow into productive citizens, and coaching the best kids out there," Johnston said.

Johnston's personality will



Coach Johnston (above) looks intently on a girls' varsity basketball game. Johnston has coached girls' basketball for twenty years in Albany. He dedicated large amounts of time and thought to improve his teams. Johnston (left) coaches Kaley Smith on how to properly throw a discus. Johnston has also coached football, cross-country, and junior high track. His wife teaches high school English and accounting.

PHOTOS BY BRIAN HAMILTON AND RACHEL HILL

always be remembered.

"My favorite memory is when the varsity girls won a big game and he jumped up and his pants fell down," senior Curry Wilson said. "I also loved travelling to out-of-town games with CJ. He blared his rock music so loudly and we always danced."

Fields agrees that Johnston

is leaving a legacy.

"He was always making corny jokes and being happy," Fields said.

Each person Johnston coached was impacted in one way or another.

"CJ impacted me tremendously," junior Abbi Beard said. "He was so encouraging and constantly pushed me to

become better. Win or lose, he loved us and believed in us."

Johnston admits that leaving his kids will be hard, but not all aspects of his job are going to be remembered as fondly.

"I will really miss being around the kids and interacting with them," Johnston said. "However, I won't miss in-service trainings. At all."

Athletes prepare for post-district meets

Track teams push hard to improve times

BY RYLIE SCOTT
News Editor

With the 2016 track season underway, the Lion and Lady Lion track and field athletes are getting a running start to prepare for the upcoming district meet held yesterday in Hamlin.

Results of the meet were not available at press time.

Head girls' track coach Ginger Norton has high hopes for the track season this spring.

"The season looks very promising because of the increased number of girls we have running," Norton said. "Many experienced runners are also back from last year."

With the help of a few novice sprinters and hurdlers, Norton expects this season to be as successful as last year's.

"Our first step is to win district," Norton said. "After that, I would like to win at area and regionals and at least get to the state meet. I'm not saying 'win' state, because we have to take one step at a time. Most of all, I just want the girls to have fun."

Out of the returning varsity runners are a few state qualifiers from last track season.

"The returners of the mile relay team that advanced to state are much

stronger," Norton said. "The sprint relay has already knocked off three seconds from their time and is continuing to improve."

Varsity runner sophomore Baley Green has been busy conditioning for the upcoming meets in 4 events, including the sprint relay.

"During most of my free time and on weekends I run around town to try to build up my endurance," Green said. "Because I'm also involved in softball, I only get to attend track workouts on Mondays and Wednesdays, so I have to make sure to give it my all at those practices."

With a lot of hard work and dedication, Green plans to return to the state track meet.

"This year I hope to get back to state not only with our mile relay but hopefully in one or two of my individual events," Green said. "We have a lot of speed and a lot of girls, and they all show up to prove themselves."

With the goal to return to the state track meet as well, junior hurdler Rachel Hill has been training regularly.

"I'm mainly trying to fine tune my form and continue fixing the small things in the 100 meter hurdler," Hill said. "The small things make a big difference during a hurdle race. I'm also working on the 400-meter dash over and over in order to cut time in my split in the mile



Senior Matthew Rupp sprints down the final stretch during the meet in Eastland. Despite the late start, the boys are running well and have broken a school record in the 800m relay. The girls are fielding a much larger squad than last year. The district meet was yesterday in Hamlin. PHOTO BY RYLIE SCOTT

relay."

Staying positive even though track can be brutal is key, according to Hill.

"It's important to not get frustrated when we don't perform exactly the way we want," Hill said. "Mental weakness can plague a track athlete, but I think our team is mentally strong."

After getting a later start due to an extended playoff basketball season, the boys' track team has been jumping into the season fast and furious.

"We haven't officially started workouts yet, but we've already competed in two track meets," head boys' track coach Rod Britting said. "The boys' performances in the track meets have been good so far, and we have plenty of returners. I feel that if we stay healthy, we should have a great year."

This year's district meet will offer some healthy competition, according to Britting.

"District-wise, Stamford will be our toughest

competition because they always bring large numbers," Britting said. "Any time you bring large numbers, you can load up in events and have multiple guys place lower but beat out higher places point-wise."

Britting is hopeful that the incoming freshmen and a few seniors will help compete.

"Cutter Edgar ran well at the first meet, and Ryan Hill has a chance to help us in distance races," Britting said. "Damian Cox

and Charles Carter, who didn't run last year, will be helpful in the sprint races as well."

Field events such as high jump and pole vault, along with the mile relay, are being held to high expectations.

"We should go really deep in pole vault and high jump," Britting said. "We have three guys between both of the two events that are capable of going to state. Also, the mile relay and other relays have a chance to be really salty."

Athletes have been working hard to train for their events.

"During practices we have been running hard and pushing each other to become the best athletes we can be," senior Michael Cotter said. "The only downside is that sometimes we take workouts lightly and don't practice as hard as we should."

Cotter has high expectations for his team and for himself.

"I expect to take the three relays to state and also return to the state meet in high jump," Cotter said.

Cotter placed second overall in high jump at the state track meet last spring.

"We have a really strong team this year," Cotter said. "We have a lot of athletes and a lot of guys with speed. Also, we have three high-jumpers and two pole-vaulters who have all been to the regional meet before."

Baseball starts district undefeated

Lions playing well despite getting late start

BY RACHEL HILL
Copy Editor

Despite several setbacks, baseball is off to a strong start.

"So far I am pleased with a great performance from these guys even though we have only had a few field practices," head baseball coach David Fairchild said.

Due to weather conditions and a late transition from basketball, the team is off to a belated start.

"Basketball went late, and we had some rainy days that caused us to miss a few days of practice," Fairchild said.

Most of the players are returners; therefore, the team is a seasoned one.

"There aren't many weaknesses I see in this team," Fairchild said. "Other than needing more days of practice to continue to improve our game, the team is a solid one."

Senior Michael Cotter agrees. "We are a very experienced



Senior Michael Cotter hits a ball against Anson in a district bout that the Lions won 7-4. The Lions were forced to begin district without any practice games due to the deep playoff run in basketball. However, the team is currently undefeated in district and is gunning for a deep run of their own. PHOTO BY RACHEL HILL

and athletic team," Cotter said. "We have a ton of pitchers and anyone can play anywhere on the field."

Besides the returners, the team also picked up two new

members.

"Dax Neece has really stepped up and done very good batting and pitching," Fairchild said.

"Freshman Joshua Dyer has also filled the roles we

needed him to. The pitching between Drew (Neece), Brian (Hamilton) and Michael (Cotter) is really solid."

Being a freshman can add a lot of pressure, but Dyer views

it differently.

"Being a freshman on varsity is a big accomplishment," Dyer said. "I feel pressure in big situations, but I am pretty relaxed otherwise. I want to continue to move up in the batting lineup and get my batting average to at least .400."

Dyer's teammates are happy with his performance.

"Josh has stepped up to fill that one spot we had open, and he is playing like an upper classman," Cotter said. "That ninth spot had been a question mark before the season started."

The team is competing in one of the toughest districts in the region.

"We are competing for the championship," Fairchild said. "I think that whoever can get out of district has a good chance to go a ways down the road."

Cotter agrees. "We are the team to beat in district this year, and our goal is to win the championship," Cotter said. "We also look like the best team in the region, and we should have a good shot to make it to the state tournament. We will just have to stay focused every game and practice hard every practice."

Lady Lions swing for the playoffs

Softball battles for a top spot in district race

BY MICHAEL COTTER
Sports Editor

The Lady Lions are fielding an experienced team this season, having no seniors on the squad last year.

"We have all the same players as last year," senior Tobi Nall said. "We do have a few new sophomores who are playing well."

The Lady Lions are hoping to better their district standings this year and compete for the title.

"We have to learn how to play well and compete in the big games against the best teams in our district," head softball coach Jimmy Fuentes said. "We want to improve our district standing and make a run at the title. That has been our goal all year."

The players also have goals

for the season, including district.

"We plan on winning district and going as deep into the playoffs as we can," Nall said.

Other team members also mentioned the importance of their motto.

"We are striving to represent our motto 'DIRT' to the fullest," sophomore Baley Green said. "It stands for discipline, integrity, respect, and tradition."

The girls feel confident in their team this season.

"We have a lot of strong, talented athletes this year," Green said. "The games are going well. We just need to work on becoming more consistent with both offense and defense at all times."

The team began the season playing well in their opening tournaments, but struggled a bit at the beginning of district.

"So far we have had a little bit of up and down," Fuentes said. "We placed in all three of our pre-season tournaments, but then we didn't play very well against Haskell in district.

We didn't hit the ball very well against a pitcher we should've been hitting."

The Lady Lions recognize areas that they need improvement.

"We just need to become more consistent in all areas of the game," Nall said. "Especially our batting, we need to keep our bats going every game."

The girls find themselves in a familiar district line-up, battling the same teams as last season.

"Haskell and Hawley are the teams to beat," Fuentes said. "Those are the same two teams that finished first and second last year."

The girls are proud of the effort their teammates are giving.

"We're overcoming adversity easier and learning to go with the flow of every situation," Nall said. "This season has already had its fair share of ups and downs. I love this team, and I could not be happier with their play."

The girls currently have a district record of 5-2 and are in third place.



Senior Lori Davis delivers a pitch against Stamford in a district game. The Lady Lions are battling for a top district spot. They currently have a record of 5-2 and are holding third place. PHOTO BY KYLEA GARDNER

Golf, tennis improve as season progresses



Junior Kaitlyn Reddin hits a ball back across the net in practice. Several athletes who are competing in either golf or tennis also participate in other spring sports, complicating practice schedules. Golf, tennis, and track athletes participated in district meets this week, hoping to advance on to the area and regional meets later in the month. PHOTO BY BRIAN HAMILTON

Players juggle conflicts with busy schedules

BY BRIAN HAMILTON
Staff Writer

Tennis and golf both persevered through the struggle of starting late due to the boys' basketball extended season.

Despite their early adversity, the tennis team managed to start the season off on a positive note.

"Our first tournament went really well for being so early in the season," tennis coach Sara Wilson said. "We didn't have much time to prepare since we had several athletes playing basketball."

Past seasons are credited for the early success.

"The players have a lot of experience which prepared them for tournament play," Wilson said.

Having a lot of experience between the teammates helps with the chemistry of the whole team.

"This year's squad has excellent chemistry with each other," Wilson said. "The comradery of the team is very helpful."

Coach Wilson strives to prepare her athletes as much as possible.

"I try to get tennis players from the community to help them on their skill play," Wilson said.

Loss of time means loss of practice, so anything that could

help the players in the short term is considered.

"Due to time constraints, I had them play several practice games and worked with them on skills such as serving and volleying," Wilson said.

Wilson watches some of her players more closely than others.

"I'm hoping to help out some of the kids by giving them individual attention to improve a specific skill," Wilson said.

The coach relies on help from community members to prepare for the challenges she expects at the district meet.

"We have a very tough district with Stamford, which is always good in the boys' division, and Hawley, which is always good in the girls' division," Wilson said. "I think we will still perform well."

Each year brings a new set of goals.

"There were only two players who went to regionals last year, so my hope is to get as many athletes to regionals as possible this year," Wilson said.

Players who fell victim to the boys' basketball playoff season, still started off well.

"The season started off really strong," junior Abbi Beard said. "Steven Ford and I placed second which is very good for our first meet."

Beard and Ford were the only tennis athletes to make it to the regional tournament last year.

"Abbi and I like to stay on top

of the game," Ford, a junior, said. "Abbi's strong competitiveness is very helpful during matches."

The golf team faced the same challenges in their first tournament due to a lack of time.

"Golf normally doesn't start so late," golf coach Ryder Peacock said. "We got behind because I was coaching basketball and our spring break was so early."

With the late start it is taking some time for the players to get back into the swing of things.

"They were a little rusty," Peacock said. "We're still coming around when it comes to getting good scores."

Practice is a necessity. "They need to get better on the greens and work on their short game," Peacock said.

In golf, coaching can play a big role in the success of the athletes.

"During the tournaments I try and keep them as focused as possible," Peacock said. "It's really easy to get frustrated in a mental game such as golf."

Staying positive is very important.

"There is only room for improvement," sophomore Felicity Coronado said. "I haven't performed as well as I've liked, but I know with a little more practice I can be a whole lot better."

Not everybody has struggled with the late start.

"I haven't practiced in four months and we tied for fourth," junior Matthew Mitchell said. "

"Voting"

Continued from | PG 1

license on his birthday.

Some seniors had a special reason for wanting to vote this year.

"I get to have a small say in who will be the next president," Cotter said. "And that is very important to me."

Drew Neece was also one of the seniors who participated in the election.

"I felt like I am taking a step further in life because only adults get to vote," Neece said. "I am able to make a decision based on what I think is good for the country."

Since seniors are able to vote, this also means they can vote for new school board members.

"I encourage seniors to vote," superintendent Shane Fields said. "It's a right and a freedom that our service men have fought for, so we should take advantage of it. I feel like if you have not voted then you don't have the right to complain about who is elected."

There will not be an election for new school board members in May since only one candidate signed up for each of the three positions that are open.

"UIL"

Continued from | PG 1

bi-district. The cast originally planned to perform another play, but had to switch at the

last minute, giving them a short amount of time to learn the new show.

Switching plays was hard for the cast.

"Learning a new play was very stressful," freshman Braden Davis said. "We had to learn a new play in a week when we normally have about two months of practice before competition."

The switch was also hard on crewmembers.

"Since I'm on crew, I have to know where all the props go," sophomore Adam Faith said. "It was difficult learning the new prop positions since I had studied the old ones."

The skills learned in One Act Play can help students later in life.

"I think being in One Act Play is something that can help me get into college," sophomore Shelby Snead said. "It is also something I can put on my resume."

One Act can also help in other areas.

"I think One Act Play will help me be more outgoing," Davis said. "It will help me communicate to people better."

One Act Play is all about working as a team to complete a goal.

"One Act has taught me a lot," Faith said. "One thing it has taught me is that from the lowest crew member to the brightest star, everyone has a job and is important in completing a task."

One Act can teach other things, too.

"One Act has taught me

to be very supportive of people," Snead said. "It has also taught me how to cope with big personalities."

One Act Play can also teach some surprising lessons.

"One Act Play has taught me to appreciate not being in a rush and being stressed out, since we were in a big rush to learn our play in a week," Davis said.

Many students participate in One Act so they can express themselves through the arts.

"I'm in One Act because I love the arts," Davis said. "I also enjoy working with my fellow classmates to make something beautiful."

One Act Play has a job for every type of person.

"My favorite part of One Act is getting to do the cast's makeup," Snead said. "This year I got to make some of the cast members look like bears."

Others just love the rush of the performance.

"I love the intense feeling I get when I have to set up my props in a very short amount of time," Faith said. "I love being challenged and I love the pressures of performing our play."

Academic District UIL was held in Anson on March 24, and the regional meet is set for April 22-23 in Odessa.

Students compete in UIL for many reasons.

"Nobody really wants to sign up for Computer Science," junior Dustin Arellano said. "I just man-up and participate so we can get

more points."

UIL helps students now, but it can also help later in life.

"UIL has made me realize that life is competitive," Arellano said. "Now I realize that I need to work hard if I want to be smart and successful."

UIL can teach practical lessons also.

"My UIL event deals with computers," Arellano said. "I have really learned how computers work and now I know how to do some cool things with them."

Even though it can take up study time, UIL can help in the classroom.

"I am in the calculators event in UIL," sophomore Kelton Parker said. "I think that now I will be able to solve harder problems in math class with a calculator."

"Cheating"

Continued from | PG 1

Waggoner said. "That, or they care more about the course grade than learning."

Raymond sees that cheating has become a shortcut for students.

"They cheat when they are too busy to actually do the work," Raymond said. "Most of them blame unfinished work on how they never have free time to do it when in fact they do. What they choose to do with their time after school, including sports or other extracurricular activities, is considered free time."

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

8 HS Tennis District Day 2, 3:00pm
 8 JH District Track Meet @ Albany, 3:00pm
 8 JV & Varsity Baseball vs. Anson @ Anson, 5:00pm
 8 Varsity Softball vs. Anson @ Anson, 5:00pm
 8 End 5th Six Weeks
 9 Buyer Seller Banquet @ Elementary Cafeteria, 6:00pm
 11-12 Varsity Golf Boys Regional Tournament, 8:00am
 12 Varsity Softball vs. Eula @ Eula, 5:00pm
 13-14 Varsity Golf Girls Regional Tournament, 8:00am
 15 HS Track Area Meet @ McMurry, 10:00am
 15 JV & Varsity Baseball vs. Hamlin @ Home, 5:00pm
 15 Varsity Softball vs. Hamlin @ Home, 5:00pm
 16-17 ILPC State Convention @ Austin
 18-19 Varsity Regional Tennis Meet
 19 JV & Varsity Baseball vs. Hawley @ Hawley, 5:00pm
 19 Varsity Softball vs. Hawley @ Hawley, 5:00pm
 21-22 Regional UIL Academic Meet @ Midland
 22 JV & Varsity Baseball vs. Baird @ Home, 5:00pm
 22 Varsity Softball vs. Baird @ Home, 5:00pm
 25-29 Golf State Tournament
 26 JV & Varsity Baseball vs. Stamford @ Stamford, 5:00pm
 29-30 HS Track Regional Meet @ Odessa, 5:00pm

MAY

2 EOC US History, 8:00am
 3 EOC Biology, 8:00am
 4 EOC Algebra I, 8:00am
 9 STAAR 7th Grade Math, 8:00am
 10 STAAR 7th Grade Reading, 8:00am
 11 STAAR 8th Grade Science, 8:00am
 12-14 State Track Meet
 12 Physics to Six Flags, 8:00am
 12 STAAR 8th Grade Social Studies, 8:00am
 16 Academic Banquet @ New Gym, 7:00pm
 17 Tennis State Meet
 17 Athletic Banquet @ New Gym, 7:00pm
 23-24 UIL Academic State Meet @ Austin
 23-25 One Act Play State Meet
 26 Graduation Practice, 10:00am
 26 End 6th Six Weeks
 27 Graduation, 7:00pm

Senior Curry Wilson (right) hits the ball to advance to first base. Wilson also participates in basketball, cheerleading, and runs cross country.



Female Athletes

People have heard or used the term "like a girl." This term is usually used to make fun of somebody who is most likely playing sports.

Girls are typically portrayed to be small, dainty, and fragile. Movies helped aid in this preception. However, over the years, girls are becoming known as strong, independent and inspiring young women.

Athletics plays a major role in show-

ing that girls are more than just ribbons and lace.

Football places boys on a pedestal that makes it seem that they are tough, agile and fast. Yet there are some girls who play football and can keep up with the boys.

Track, softball, tennis, and golf are just a few sports in which female athletes participate. Some girls even show off their talents in multiple sports.

PHOTOS AND STORY BY CURRY WILSON



Junior Kaitlyn Reddin (left) practices tennis. Reddin has been playing throughout her high school career. Junior Rachel Hill (bottom) competes in the 100 meter hurdles. Hill also runs the 300 meter hurdles, as well as the mile relay. Last year, Hill ran at the state track meet in the 100m hurdles, 300m hurdles and mile relay. She placed second in the 100m hurdles and fourth in the 300m hurdles.



Senior Tobi Nall (right) fields the ball to record an out for the team. Nall plays short stop for the Lady Lions. Nall plays other sports such as volleyball and track. Nall runs the sprint relay, the 200 meter dash, the mile relay, and long jump. She has received many awards for her athleticism. Sophomore Kourtnee Waters (left) putts on the green at the local golf tournament. Not only does Waters participate in golf, she also is involved in high school cheerleading and competitive cheerleading. Jesse Vega (top) sprints to finish in the 800 meter relay. Vega also runs the 800 and the mile. Vega also contends in cross country and in basketball.

