



THE

LIONS ROAR

"Lion pride in print"

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ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL

ALBANY, TEXAS 76430

VOLUME 12 NUMBER 4

Movies falsely portray love



Students share their opinions on popular movies interpreting romance.

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Love in high school leads to marriage



Albany alumni reminisce on how they met their loves.

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Basketball jumps into playoffs

Lions and Lady Lions press onward through playoffs in hopes of earning trip to Austin

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One Act Play works towards regionals

Theater department gets new coach

BY LORI DAVIS
Copy Editor

The One-Act play cast and crew is busy making preparations for their first competition which is scheduled for March 20.

Practice started on January 20, following auditions for this year's play.

After previous sponsor Greta Sherrill retired last year, the school reassigned elementary teacher Jennifer Everitt to replace her.

"My goal is to start building a strong program," Everitt said.

The One-Act play members are enjoying the new sponsor.

"It is interesting having a different teacher," senior cast member Elizabeth Moore said. "I miss Mrs. Sherrill, but it is also exciting having someone new."

The cast and crew have been rehearsing the play *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*.



Sophomore Curry Wilson and Freshman Ryan Phillips rehearse lines in preparation for OAP audition held January 20. PHOTO BY LORI DAVIS

"The play takes place during the Holocaust at a concentration camp named Terezin," Everitt said.

The play comes from the approved list.

"UIL provides a list of accepted plays, and you can pick any of those," Everitt said. "You can choose a play that isn't on the list, but it has to be approved by the UIL."

This year 20 people auditioned for cast and crew positions.

"I can only take a maximum of 15 cast and crew

members," Everitt said.

With all of the spring activities going on, it has been difficult to find time to practice.

"Since everyone is so busy, we sometimes can't have practice until around 7:30 p.m.," Everitt said. "It can make for a long, hard day for the students."

Moore agrees with Everitt.

"Most of us have jobs or play sports, so One-Act often gets overlooked," Moore said.

Some students just have to find the time.

"It is hard to make time for everything, but I just make One-Act fit into my schedule," freshman cast member Roman Fuentes said.

Even though it is very hard to fit in all of the One-Act play practices, Everitt says it is well worth it.

"One-Act takes a lot of work, but the amount of fun involved greatly outweighs it," Everitt said.

Several of the students have set goals for themselves this year.

"My goal is to not mess up on my lines," Fuentes

said.

Moore would like to do better than the team did last year.

"Last year we advanced to district, and my goal is to make it one step further," Moore said. "It might be tough to do with a new teacher, but making it one more round would be an accomplishment."

However, Everitt isn't letting the fact that it is her first year stop her from having big hopes for the team.

"I would like to make it to regionals," Everitt said.

Everitt is also trying to get more people involved in the program.

"Since we don't have an art program anymore, this and band are really the only opportunities that students have to participate in the arts," Everitt said.

Some of the students like One-Act because it is a lot different than some of the other things in which they are involved.

"It is the only school-related activity that you are allowed to just let loose and have fun," Moore said. "There are serious parts, but there is never a dull moment."

Fuentes wanted to try something new.

"Mrs. Everitt asked me if I wanted to tryout, and I decided that it would be fun to do something different," Fuentes said.

Everitt's favorite thing about One-Act Play is getting to know the students.

"I love getting to see them overcome their inhibitions and become successful," Everitt said.

One-Act play can also teach students life skills.

"It teaches students to be leaders and to see life through different points of view," Everitt said. "It helps them become a more well-rounded person."

When it comes to selecting props for the play, there are various rules and regulations.

"The UIL is very technical," Everitt said. "You are more likely to mess up technically than while performing."

A few of the rules are that you can't play more than 10 minutes of music during the play, and you can't have more than 10 yards of fabric on the set.

"All of the props have to be approved by the UIL before you can use them," Everitt said.

School, work add stress on students

Teenagers deal with exhausting schedules

BY DARLENE SCHWABROCH
Staff Writer

Gas money, cellphone payments, clothes for special events, presents for Christmas or birthdays, hanging out with friends at the mall or going to the movies – nowadays teenagers have a lot of expenses that their parents expect them to pay for themselves.

The older the children get, the more freedom and responsibility they receive, which often includes their money.

Since expenses can pile up, many students have decided to get a job.

Sophomore Savannah Perez teaches young girls dancing at The Whitney Theatre several times per week and says it can become stressful.

"I have to go straight from school to work every day, so I'm often stressed with homework and all," she said.

Having to work so often might make students miss school events like sports games or dances.

If I have something to go to I just tell them I have to leave early," she said.

It's not that easy for senior Lexie Lee who works at the Albany Sports

Center, at Buckhead in Abilene, and tutors and babysits almost everyday.

"Sometimes it becomes overwhelming, but I know I can do it."

Lee says she doesn't have a disadvantage because of going to school and working at the same time.

"I'm making money, so it's in my favor in the end," Lee said.

Still, it's exhausting for Lee to juggle work and school.

"It really is hard because you have to take time for your work, but you also have to study for school. It's hard, but you get used to it," she said.

Junior Blayne Cauble views his work at a ranch near Breckenridge as an education itself.

"It's like a learning experience. It's something to know for when I'm done with high school."

Having a job at a young age is not just a paid avocation, but is also an important part of a child's development teaching discipline and teamwork. Also, students learn to deal with stress which they will most likely experience when they are older.

Perez has to handle different kinds of classes everyday.

"I have improved," she said. "I can pick up things more quickly."

Having a job also helps students get used to being at new places and dealing with difficulties.

"At the beginning I was really scared to mess up, but now I'm just doing it without thinking about it too much," Lee said.

Kyler Conde who works at EZ Feed thinks that jobs at a young age help you prepare for the daily routine of a "real" future job.

"Everything you do is going to make you better somehow," Conde said.

Although money is the primary factor that causes students to look for a job, most of them have fun at work and wouldn't want to trade it.

"I love my jobs. I told everyone I have the best jobs in town," Lee said.

Despite the advantage of their current employment, most students said that it is something temporary.

"I think I would like aspects of it later, but not all of it," Conde said.

Savannah Perez has a similar opinion.

"I don't think so. I mean, I enjoy it right now, but I don't think I'll continue afterwards," she said.

Jobs help young people to find out who they are and what they want to do with their future. Experiencing a certain kind of position is a "foretaste" of what serious employment might be like.

Some will miss their current jobs when they graduate.

"I like being at the ranch. It's just going to be

different, not being able to just go out there and actually do something," Cauble said.

Conde stated that he would miss his job, too.

"It's just a great place to work and a fun place to be around," he said.

Having a job as a teenager is an opportunity to learn discipline and teamwork. Patience, skills, and dealing with stress can be improved, but it helps collecting interesting experiences along the way.

Even though many students claim that it is often stressful and exhausting to go to school and have a job at the same time, most teenagers continue to juggle both.



Senior Lexie Lee (top) helps spot young cheerleaders during their half-time performance. Sophomore Savannah Perez (bottom) teaches little ballerinas the correct way to do an arabesque. PHOTOS BY DARLENE SCHWABROCH

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Winter Formal royalty results

Winter Formal was held at the Whitney Theatre on January 11. Each year students nominate three girls and three boys who are then voted on for prince and princess spots.

The prince and princess for the freshman class were Abbi Beard and Hunter Owen, sophomores were Tobin Nall and Levi Britting, juniors were Valerie Gandara and Colin Read, and Mr. and Miss AHS were Jared Husmann and Madison Jones.

Each prince was given a \$10 gift card, and the princesses a crown.

OAP cast list announced

"I Never Saw Another Butterfly" is the title of this year's One-Act play, which is about the Holocaust during World War II. The auditions for the play were held on January 20. Kathryn Hamilton received the lead role as

Raja, accompanied by supporting actors Tyler Miller, Lexi Hudson, Sydney Key, Roman Fuentes, Kylea Gardner, Elizabeth Moore, Curry Wilson, Rachel Kitchens, Dillon Freasier, and Matthew Rupp. The OAP crew consists of Molly Lee, Lexie Lee, and Cason Asher. The first UIL competition to present the play is on March 20.

UIL realignment

Starting next year, Albany will be competing in new districts for all UIL events.

For football, the Lions will compete in Class 2A Division 2, joining Baird, Cross Plains, Gorman, Perrin-Whitt, Ranger and Santo.

Albany has been moved to District 7 in Region I for

basketball. The district will include Anson, Hamlin, Haskell, Hawley, Roscoe Collegiate, Stamford and Winters.

Although enrollments figures did not change substantially, Albany moved to Class 2A because of a shift in the naming of divisions which now includes Classes 1A through 6A.

Editorials

Lack of involvement

High school is all about getting involved and participating in extracurricular activities. Many students partake in more than one, including sports, band, theater and more. School involvement is flourishing in most areas except one – academic UIL competitions. The number of participants has dwindled down to the lowest level in years. More students should be active participants in academic competitions.

The University of Interscholastic League was created to provide educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests, but students don't seem to want to compete in the academic aspect. The UIL offers the most comprehensive literary and academic competition in the nation, which includes 23 high school events. UIL provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their talent in specifically skilled events.

Events like Number Sense, Mathematics, Science, and Spelling & Vocabulary test your brain and can actually benefit you in the classroom. Academic UIL events are designed to incorporate many elements of required high school coursework. Competing in contests can enhance classroom learning and can improve test scores.

Participating in one or more UIL events can also enhance college applications, and can make students likely to receive scholarships. Colleges want students who are willing to put time in outside of class to compete locally, regionally and nationally in the fields that interest them. It shows a genuine academic interest that leads to better classroom involvement and better grades.

With all of the opportunities in a small school, many students claim that their busy schedules prevent them from having time for an academic UIL event. Many events do not require vast amounts of practice, and most events only an hour or less. With enough determination and passion for UIL, students and teachers can work together to find a way to compete.

What separates students from the pack is what they choose to do with their spare time. UIL can make them stand out from the rest. Students should challenge their minds because it can reward them in the long run.

Balancing school, work

Students that attend school and go to work sure do have a lot on their plate, but that doesn't mean that it's a bad thing. It actually teaches valuable lessons.

One thing that working while in high school teaches is responsibility. Those who juggle school and work are taught the significance of being reliable to others in the workplace before they even reach the college level.

These students learn how to depend on themselves and have self-assurance. Working allows them to save money or have spending money that they earned and were not just given. Money earned usually means more and is better appreciated.

Also, having a job while attending school prepares students for life. After college, working will be a main priority, and already having experience will give them more confidence about working later on.

Students who oppose working during high school may think that there is not enough time to work, but having a part-time job helps prepare them for college where there will be even more demands on their time.

Working while attending school teaches many different virtues that can be valuable for the rest of a student's life.



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ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL

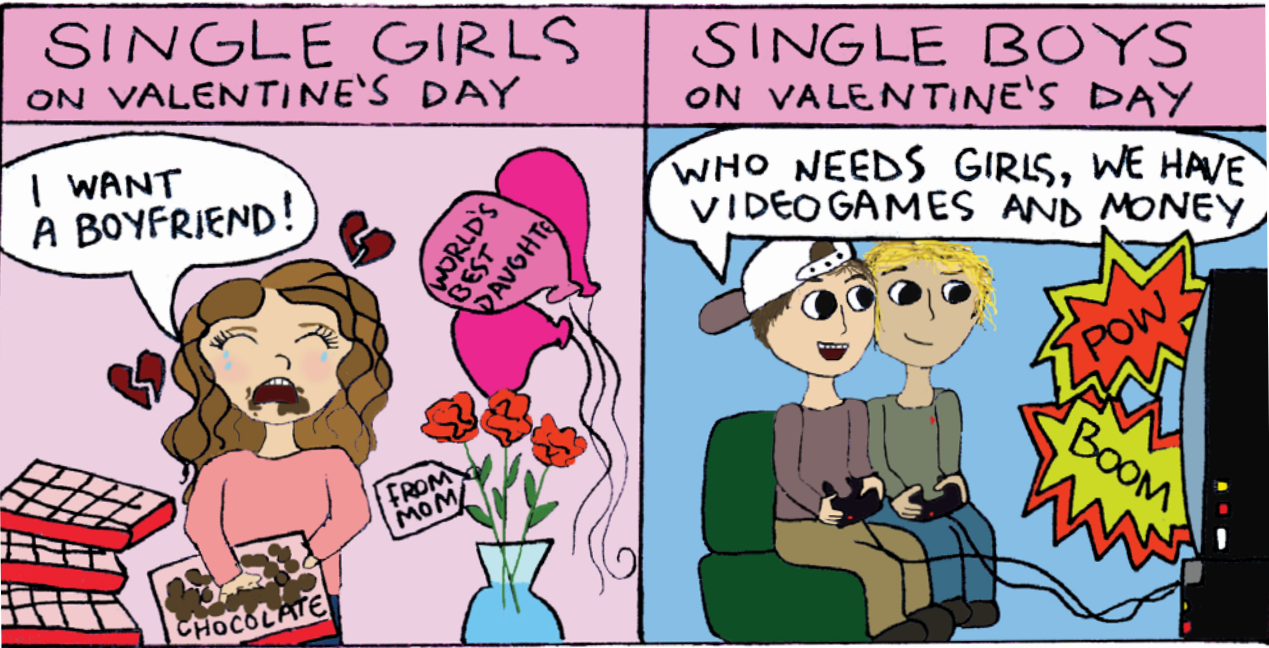
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Never Been Kissed: The sequel

The night was wrapping up. The movie *Balls of Fury* was finally over. I don't think there could be a better way to set the mood than to watch a comedy about a death match Ping-Pong game. To be honest, however, I was freaking out inside.

This movie, which I usually find absolutely hilarious, was muted by my twisting stomach. This guy was the first boy I had seriously talked to, and I had no idea how to act or what to say. My mind was racing a mile a minute.

"Kathryn, get a grip and take a chill pill. Just act normal; be yourself. Stop over thinking everything. You're kind of odd and may have clammy hands, but hey, he hasn't sneaked out the window yet."

As I wiped my hands on the side of my jeans, we made our way through my kitchen as I walked him out to the driveway. I was surprisingly collected all of sudden. My stomach no longer felt like it was about to turn over. This was the moment I had been waiting for – the moment that only movies and Nicholas Sparks books had prepared me for. It certainly wasn't my incredibly wide-ranging experience with boys. But this was it. We looked at each other and I waited. He came in closer to give me a long hug. "You're a really good friend."

Really? Are you kidding me? I smile, although I'm desperately confused and a bit ticked off. I go back inside

and lean my head back against the door. I was so close. So very close...

"Someone once told me that to write well, you have to write what you know. This is what I know."

I very well might be the next Josie Gellar. And for those who do not recognize that name, think back to the article written by the geeky reporter in the movie *Never Been Kissed*. Gellar continued, "I am twenty-five years old. I have never really kissed a guy."

Well in my case, I am 17 years old, and I have never kissed a guy. And at this rate, I could read this column years from now and think, "Oh my freaking gosh. It still hasn't happened." But as I look back to last year when I thought I was going to get my first kiss, I am a little disappointed. Not disappointed that my previous "talking" relationship (whatever that means) didn't work out, but because I'm a tad tired of having virgin lips.

So as this lovely day of February 14 falls, I embrace this embarrassing admission and my singleness. Josie Gellar did it, and so can I. However, she was a fictional character and did get her kiss at the end of the movie. Nonetheless, there it is. I, Kathryn Hamilton, have never been kissed. I am not ashamed or too embarrassed to admit it either. But until the end of my movie, when the timing is right, my always-chapsticked-virgin lips will have to keep waiting.

BY KATHRYN HAMILTON

Kats Meows

BY CONOR WILSON

Wilson Words

During the fall in Albany, the street sign poles are covered in red and white streamers. The Bank Park is decorated with football player's names on a huge display along with pictures of the cheerleaders. Downtown pep rallies signal the beating of the drum for dedicated fans who stay up all night waiting for the playoff game the next day. The sirens of police cars, ambulances, and fire trucks blare during the sendoff for the football team. A parade of people lined up and down Main-Street holding balloons and signs are thrilled to be sending the Albany Lions to victory, but when the season is over...the town is dead.

Albany is known for its pride for its favorite sport... football. Whether it's a scrimmage or a playoff game, the stands are always full. But what about sports other than football? I can assure you that there aren't near as many people in the stands as there are at a football game.

The reason community members come to basketball, softball and baseball games is only because it gives them something to do. It is the only action that is happening in the town of 2,000. What about tennis, golf, and track?

Being a cheerleader, I can definitely tell the difference in the atmosphere between football and other sports. It is

much easier getting the crowd involved at a football game than it is getting them to cheer during a basketball game. Fans have an influence during the game for athletes. The better the crowd, the more exciting the game is, and the better the players play.

The energy is completely different. Sometimes it's hard to get the fans to stop cheering during football games so that the cheerleaders can lead a cheer.

Athletes who play football in this town become well known. Everyone knows them, the little kids love them, and even former residents keep up with them. Football players hold a special place in this town, but when they come back to visit after they graduate, they are just one of the fans.

Playing sports year round, I realize that the only crowd action I receive is when I cheer during football games. Some of our coaches ask us to tell people and invite them to our games. I believe that we as athletes should not have to worry about the size of the crowd, and coaxing people to come is pretty depressing. Albany is very supportive in anything the school does, but you definitely can tell the difference when you have fans who are die-hard football fanatics at every game between fans who have nothing to do at the other sporting events.

Stepping up in the UIL sports world

This next year is a big year for sports. Not only will there be the district realignments, but possibly far greater changes.

Class 6A will be created, but not to house the state's mega-high schools. Instead, during the 2014-16 realign-

ment, the current Class A will be split in two, with the remaining classes re-labeled, thus making the large 5A schools become 6A. This does not mean that the small 1A schools, currently considered 6-man, will change their rules.

Charter schools will no longer automatically be placed in Class 1A. The lowest classification of the city where the charter school is located is where that school will be placed. For instance, Dallas Triple A Academy, the 2013 Division I-1A champs in boys basketball, will be placed in 3A in the future.

Class 3A will become a split classification in 2014 for football. Split means that before the school year starts, those schools will find out if they will play in Division I or Division II when the playoffs roll around. This will avoid the four or five-team districts in Class 3A that will

help traveling distances.

Along with classification adjustments, the UIL will also discuss the possible change in location for state championships. It is likely that AT&T Stadium in Arlington will continue to host the football championships, but there is a

chance that the state basketball tournament may be relocated. This is due to the difficulty of fans finding hotel rooms with the music festival, South by Southwest, also being held in Austin at the same time.

There will also be another rule added to the books. Implemented in the NCAA this year, UIL is now looking to enforce the "Targeting Rule." This rule was predestined to eliminate the number of concussions and other head/neck injuries.

When a player goes helmet-to-helmet during a football game, officials can eject that player from the game. In college football, if the ejection occurs in the second half that player must sit out the first half of the next game. That is unlikely to happen in high school games. It is optimistic that the player will be able to play in the next game.

BY CHANDLER FIELDS

ChanChan

Who, where and when was your first kiss?



2¢ worth

"I was in 8th grade at Mark Welch's birthday party where he kissed me under the stars. It was gross."

Dee Dee Waggoner
Counselor



"I was out in front of the gym before a basketball game and David Smith awkwardly kissed me."

Jennifer Edmison
Science Teacher



"When I was only five years old, I fell in love with Hershey's Kisses."

Dwayne Norton
Science Teacher



"My first kiss was against my will. I was in 5th grade when a 7th grade girl pinned me against the wall and forced me to kiss her."

Jimmy Fuentes
Spanish Teacher



Romantic movies give false hope

True love isn't
rightly portrayed
in movies

BY AUSTIN EDENFIELD
Entertainment Editor

Movies like *The Notebook*, *A Cinderella Story*, *Love Actually*, and many Disney movies all have one thing in common: the characters spend the entire movie looking for love, and then in the end they find the person that they'll always love forever. They get together and the movie ends, but you never find out what happens next.

"I watch romantic movies all the time," junior Megan Munns said. "My favorite would have to be *The Notebook*."

The Notebook is a love story about a guy, Noah, from a poor family who falls in love with a girl named Allie whose family is rich. Once her family finds out who he is and that he is poor, they take her away.

The movie begins with a very old Noah visiting Allie in the hospital, where she is suffering from dementia and has forgotten all about her husband. Before she lost her memories, she wrote down their story so he could tell it to her and she would remember again.

"I watch movies like that with my girlfriend sometimes, but never by myself," sophomore Tyler Miller said. "They're too sappy and fake to me."

One of the iconic scenes in the movie is when Noah climbs a Ferris Wheel at a carnival to tell Allie he loves her.

"While it's very romantic that he would do that, stuff like that doesn't ever happen in real life. Nobody goes to lengths like that for love these days," Munns said.

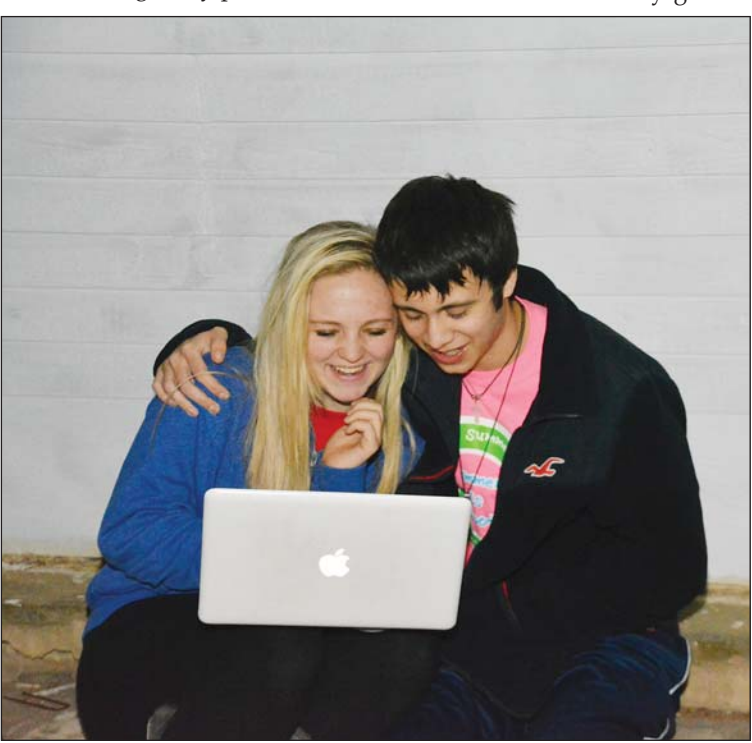
Though movies portray love as something that happens all the time, perhaps it isn't a true representation of how it really occurs.

"Even though there are times my relationship with Tyler feels like it could be something out of a

movie," freshman Kylea Gardner said, "there are quite a few things in romantic movies like that which aren't true."

Sometimes movies like *The Notebook* do get key parts of rela-

tionships right, though. During one part in the movie, Noah and Allie meet, but Allie is engaged to another man.



Freshman Kylea Gardner and Sophomore Tyler Miller gather around their laptop to enjoy a romantic comedy. PHOTO BY AUSTIN EDENFIELD

Some-times two people who think they're in love don't stay together. Parts like fighting scenes and people falling in love with the wrong people actually have a ring of truth to it," Gardner said. "There are fights in relationships, although maybe not to the extent the movies show. Then again, a lot of movies show the couples never having problems,

which definitely isn't accurate." These movies portray that although couples may get into fights, they'll always stay together in the end. Young couples who go to see these movies may get the

impression that all love is like this, which may not necessarily be the case for them.

"Most of the movies are pretty fake," Miller said, "except for maybe the arguing and the fighting. Relationships aren't nearly as easy as they make it seem."

"Don't go into a relationship expecting it to be like a fairy tale or a romantic movie," Gardner said. "Even if a couple stays together after a fight, that doesn't mean that they are absolutely going to be together forever."

Movies that show couples getting together during high school, becoming high school sweethearts, and getting married may also be misleading to young teens.

"Couples may start dating thinking that they are going to be high school sweethearts, but it doesn't turn out like that very often," Munns said.

Although there are a lot of false portrayals of love in romantic movies in today's times, they still present nice stories for those who are romantically inclined. They may also present good messages for those who are currently in a relationship.

"If there is one thing that romantic movies have taught me, it's that if you truly do love someone,

it will always be worth it no matter how many fights or breakups you may go through," Gardner said.

Committing to a relationship is something that should be taken seriously, and not taken with a "true love at first sight" perspective. It can be a serious decision in a person's life.

"Don't commit to someone if you aren't completely serious because it will be one of the biggest decisions you'll ever make," Miller said. "Relationships are about complete trust and commitment."

A lot of the points in the movies that are misleading may not be entirely ridiculous for all relationships. Couples may find that their relationship mirrors some of the nicer aspects of romantic movies.

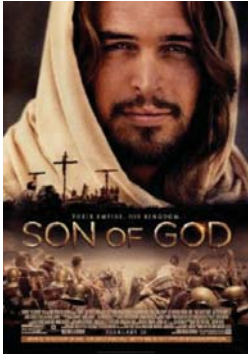
"Dating Kylea is pretty awesome, and every day is pretty much a new adventure," Miller said. "But I wouldn't go so far as to say that we're like a romantic movie."

Some couples may even have relationships straight out of movies, complete with all the sappy drama and romance.

"While a lot of the scenes in romantic movies aren't very realistic, I do believe that it is still possible and probably does happen to some couples every now and then," Munns said.




ROARING REVIEWS



Son of God
February 28, 2014 PG-13 138 min
Drama

The life story of Jesus is told from his humble birth through his teachings, crucifixion and ultimate resurrection.

Director: Christopher Spencer
Writers: Richard Bedser, Christopher Spencer
Stars: Diogo Morgado, Roma Downey, Amber Rose Revah, Louise Delamere

Staff Review: 




The Lego Movie
February 7, 2014 PG 100 min
Animation | Action | Comedy | Family

An ordinary LEGO minifigure, mistakenly thought to be the extraordinary Master Builder, is recruited to join a quest to stop an evil LEGO tyrant from gluing the universe together.

Directors: Phil Lord, Christopher Miller
Writers: Dan Hageman, Kevin Hageman
Stars: Christ Pratt, Elizabeth Banks, Will Arnett, Morgan Freeman


Staff Review: 



RoboCop
February 12, 2014 PG-13 118 min
Action | Crime

In 2028 Detroit, when Alex Murphy (Joel Kinnaman) - a loving husband, father and good cop - is critically injured in the line of duty, the multinational conglomerate OmniCorp sees their chance for a part-man, part-robot police officer.

Director: Jose Padilha
Writers: Joshua Zetumer, Edward Neumeier
Stars: Joel Kinnaman, Douglas Urbanski, Abbie Cornish, Gary Oldman

Staff Review: 



The Monuments Men
February 7, 2014 PG-13 118 min
Action | Biography | Drama

An unlikely World War II platoon are tasked to rescue art masterpieces from Nazi thieves and return them to their owners.

Director: George Clooney
Writers: George Clooney, Grant Hesloy
Stars: George Clooney, Cate Blanchett, Matt Damon, Bill Murray

Staff Review: 

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT
BY AUSTIN EDENFIELD

Secret Life of Walter Mitty

The movie *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* takes a new spin on the typical underdog story. Walter Mitty is a boring, shy and non-aspiring photo editor for LIFE magazine. He's the typical normal person, going through a routine each day and never doing anything amazing, at least on the surface.

In reality, Walter Mitty has a vivid imagination, and often goes off into daydreams about doing amazing things. These daydreams really come into play when he meets a fellow co-worker on whom he has a crush.

When Walter processes a roll of photos that is missing a very key photo, he sets off on a wild adventure across the world to places like Iceland and Greenland to meet the man who took the picture and get it back. He does things that he never would have even dreamed of before taking off on his journey.

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty was very entertaining. While a bit hard to follow at a few brief times, it still delivered laughs and suspense throughout the entire movie.

Although it was another typical underdog story, this movie took several twists that made it unique and enjoyable. From the very first daydream to the end of the movie, most viewers will be on the edge of their seats waiting to see what happens next.

Along with being enjoyable, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* is family friendly, with no cursing or inappropriate themes. Children and adults can both safely watch and enjoy this movie, and it makes for a great family night out.

Frozen

Disney's new movie, *Frozen*, is hilarious and heartwarming.

A girl named Elsa has trapped a kingdom with her powers of ice, and her sister Anna makes a team with a guy named Kristoff to rescue it and talk to her sister. Along with a funny snowman named Olaf, they travel through frozen lands to get to the kingdom.

Along the way they make many more friends and go through many perils to get to their goal, aided by several songs along way.

While annoying in many movies, the songs in *Frozen* go hand in hand with the movie and make it very enjoyable.

Frozen has many scenes full of suspense which will keep viewers on the edge of their seats and waiting for what happens next.

Frozen is full of Disney's classic sing-alongs and comedy which makes it a good watch for both children and adults, whether they're taking their kids to see it or not.

With plenty of epic adventure scenes, as well as the ever-present laughs, *Frozen* is a movie many viewers will want to see more than once. It will continue to thrill and make watchers laugh every time they see it if they have any sort of a heart.

Frozen is a movie that's perfect for anything from a family night out to a romantic date night, or even for going with friends or going alone. It is a movie that provides joy and laughter to anyone who cares to watch it.

Award Shows

Every year, more and more awards appear to be handed out to successful and talented people. Actors, musicians, gamers, singers and many others do their best to be nominated for awards. The Golden Globes, Grammys, the Oscars, Tonies, and MTV Music Awards are all handed out every year to people the public or critics think did the best performance.

This year at the Golden Globes, actors like Matthew McConaughey, Kate Winslet, Leonardo DiCaprio, and many others received awards for acting in their respective categories.

Movies like *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Her*, *Frozen*, *Gravity*, and *The Book Thief* all gathered awards in their movie categories. These films were chosen from numerous others released in 2013 and determined as the best.

Meanwhile, at the Grammys this year, music artists like Daft Punk, Lorde, Bruno Mars, Taylor Swift and Macklemore received nominations and awards for their music and songwriting.

Songs like "Roar," "When I Was Your Man," "Royals," "Blurred Lines," and "Paradise" received awards in their music genres. Grammys were given to the writers of the songs to those whom performed them.

For anyone who wants to be in the know about music, acting and gaming, award shows are a great way to keep up with what's popular right now.

These are yearly shows and will continue to air until people no longer care about what's new and trending.

Alumni find lasting love while young

High school sweethearts reminisce over their beginning

BY MELINDA PHILLIPS
Staff Writer

Although high school relationships are portrayed as the ones that won't last, the few that do survive have an amazing story behind them.

After the many years spent together, some local couples still vividly remember the most important moments experienced with each other and have continued to grow a stronger relationship as time has passed.

For Alex and Sloan Balliew, their relationship turned out to be more than they would've expected at first.

"We had never really talked much before," Alex said. "We had both just gotten out of long relationships and decided to date each other our junior year of high school."

It wasn't long before the couple began spending quality time together to put some romance in the mix.

"On our first date, we went to the golf course and star gazed," Sloan said. "I was playing her favorite song when I pulled up and opened the car door for her."

As the bond grew stronger between the two, Sloan knew Alex was the girl he wanted to marry.

"I was driving with her dad to a softball game, and I had already gotten the ring from my grandmother," Sloan said. "I was really nervous about asking her dad because we were so young, but he supported it."

After receiving approval from her father, Sloan had the perfect plan for a proposal during their class trip to Paris.

"My original plan was to propose on the Eiffel tower," Sloan said, "but that plan was ruined by a storm."

Having it set in his mind to propose that night, Sloan came up with a backup plan to give it another shot.

"I went down and knocked on her door after we had gotten back to the hotel to ask her if she'd take a walk with me," Sloan said. "We walked to a little garden, and I told her how I felt about her, and then I got on my knee and proposed. She said, yes."

The couple now have

two children, Tucker (age 3), and Luke (age 1), added to their family.

Being good friends since their first years of elementary school, Prairie Parker (Freeman) and Brian Wilson already had a strong connection that had been growing for years.

"We had been friends since I was in kindergarten, and we would talk a lot in fourth grade," Prairie said. "I still have all the notes he had written me."

It wasn't until her sophomore year that they officially began dating, and because Brian played professional baseball in the minor leagues, the couple was on the road a lot.

"I wanted to go with him while he traveled for baseball, and we had been talking about getting married," Prairie said.

On the way home from a Christmas break trip her freshman year of college, Brian found a way to propose to Prairie.

"He had his coat on the seat next to me and told me to reach into his jacket to get some gum," Prairie said. "But instead of gum, he had the ring box in there."

After finding the ring, she was proposed to right then and there.

"He pulled over on the side of the road and asked me to marry him," she said. "We got married on August 15, had a four-day honeymoon in Acapulco, Mexico and had school three days later."

Although they spent the first eight years of their marriage on the road, they felt as though they were home the whole time.

"In the beginning of

our marriage, we were on the road with no specific place to live," Prairie said. "It was an interesting lifestyle, and Brian felt like anywhere we were together was home."

One of the fondest memories she holds on to is the day the family spent together at a national park close to home.

"Brian made a picnic and took the kids to the Glacier National Park in Montana," Prairie said. "We had lunch in the park alongside the river."

In another case, A.V. and Pat Jones have been setting the example of a strong relationship for 68 years.

"She was a freshman cheerleader, and I was playing on the football team," A.V. said. "The head cheerleader told all cheerleaders to walk off the field with one of the players. Being new to the school and not knowing any body, she picked me to walk off the field with."

The next week the two attended a party together with their schoolmates, which was also their first date.

"I invited him to the Backwards Party," Pat said, "which was a party that the girls had to ask the boys to where they served dessert first, the meal second, and the salad last."

Being a year older than Pat, A.V. left for Cisco Junior College a year before she graduated, but they soon were together again for good.

"We had been talking about getting married, and we were making plans for the next year," A.V. said. "I had asked her to come with me to Cisco Junior College, and we got married in September of 1950."

The couple has enjoyed a life full of shared interests.

"We've had a chance to travel a lot," A.V. said. "Seeing some of the really interesting sites was always really romantic."

The most memorable trip for the two was one planned for their fiftieth anniversary.

"We went to a place in upper New York called 'The Point,'" Pat said. "We stayed in one of the most famous retreats at Niagara Falls and had a great view from our room."

Despite the fact that no two relationships are alike, the one thing that held these sweethearts together has been love.



Senior Brian Wilson and Junior Prairie Wilson-Freeman pose for their picture at the 1990 AHS Prom, just two years before the couple joined in marriage. The Wilson couple started dating in junior high and continued throughout high school. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PRAIRIE WILSON-FREEMAN



High school sweethearts A.V. and Pat Jones (above) pose at their high school picnic in 1947. Sloan and Alex Balliew (left) snapshot one of their many high school memories together. The 1940s and 2007 graduates still reside in Albany today, raising and surrounding themselves with family.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ALEX BALLIEW AND A.V. JONES



MEET THE BOARD

Doug Neece: Board Member



Doug Neece, board member of the Albany ISD School Board, has held his position on the board since 2006.

"I wanted to join the school board mainly as a chance to give back to the great school system that my kids are in," Neece said.

Neece has contributed much of his time and resources to the community as a way of giving back.

"I think it's an important job to volunteer and give back to the schools that my kids are enrolled in," Neece said. "I love the small town life of Albany since I grew up in a big high school in Oklahoma City."

He has held the reins of vice president of the Little League board for two years, and has previously been vice president of the Feed Store board. Neece has also contributed to other clubs in Albany, such as coaching the youth football team and helping with the Boy Scouts.

Neece has had a major impact on Albany the 12 years he has

resided in the town, even though he wasn't born and raised near the community.

"My wife was born and raised here. We had our oldest son and decided we wanted to raise him and start our family in Albany," Neece said. "It was a big adjustment moving from Oklahoma City to Albany at first, but I love how close everyone is in the community is."

Neece graduated and received his Bachelor's of Business Administration from Abilene Christian University and is currently a Commercial Real Estate Appraiser. He and his wife Kim have four sons, three of which are in the Albany school system and one not yet old enough to be enrolled.

Kelly Head: Board Member



Board member Kelly Head is a long-time trustee of the Albany ISD School Board. A member since 2007, Head has almost completed his second term.

Head has been a member of the Shackelford County Appraisal Board, a Farm Bureau director, and vice president of the

BY: Chandler Fields

Shackelford County Livestock Association.

Although he hasn't lived here all of his life, Head has made his mark on the community the 18 years he has resided here. He joined the board as a way of giving back.

"When I was growing up, I saw older people working for the community," Head said. "So I am trying to pay back those people and the community for their time."

Head knew Albany was the right fit at first sight, and now he has both children in the school system.

"I fell in love with the town as soon as I started dating my wife," he said.

Head received his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Business and Economics from West Texas State University and is currently the County Director for USDA Farm Service Agency.

WHAT'S HAPPENING! CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February

- 14 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Clyde @ 4:30 - Here
- 18 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Hawley @ 4:30 - There
- 19 Hawley Invitational Tennis Meet @ 8:00 - Rose Park in Abilene
- 20 Varsity Girls Softball Stephenville Tournament
- 20 Albany Varsity Baseball Tournament
- 21 Boys and Girls Track in Hamlin
- 25 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Hamlin @ 4:30 - There
- 25 JV Boys Baseball vs. Haskell @ 4:40 - There
- 27 Varsity Girls Softball Eula Tournament
- 27 JV Boys Baseball Coleman Tournament
- 27 Boys and Girls Track in Breckenridge

March

- 1 UIL Meet in Plains
- 2 Boys Golf Tournament @ 9:00 in Seymour
- 3 Girls Golf Tournament @ 9:00 in Seymour
- 3 Varsity Boys Baseball Fund raiser @ 5:00 - Here
- 4 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Eula @ 4:30 - Here
- 4 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Graford @ 5:00 - Here
- 6 Boys and Girls Track in DeLeon
- 7 Santa Anna Invitational Tennis Meet @ 8:00
- 7 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Anson @ 4:30 - There
- 7 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Baird @ 5:00 - Here
- 7 JV Boys Baseball Haskell Tournament
- 11 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Stamford @ 1:00 - Here
- 11 UIL Meet in Cross Plains
- 14 Varsity Girls Softball 4:30p.m.
- 15 Boys and Girls Track in Hamlin
- 17 JV Boys Baseball vs. Abilene High 9th @ 4:30 - There
- 18 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Baird @ 5:00 - Here
- 18 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Gordon @ 5:00 - There
- 19 Jim Ned Invitational Tennis Meet @ 8:00
- 19 Boys and Girls Golf Tournament in Jim Ned @ 8:30
- 20 Zone One-Act Play in Anson
- 21 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Ranger @ 5:00 - There
- 24 Girls Golf Meet in Olney @ 9:00
- 25 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Haskell @ 5:00 - There
- 25 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Santo @ 5:00 - Here
- 26 District UIL Meet @ Haskell
- 27 Varsity Boys Baseball Hamlin Tournament
- 27 Boys and Girls Track in Cisco
- 28 District One-Act Play

April

- 1 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Lipan @ 5:00 - Here
- 1 7th Grade Writing STAAR
- 1 8th Grade Math STAAR
- 1 English Two STAAR
- 2 7th Grade Writing STAAR
- 2 8th Grade Writing STAAR
- 2 Boys and Girls Golf Tournament in Albany @ 9:00
- 3 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Eula @ 5:00 - There
- 4 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Grayford @ 5:00 - There
- 4-5 District Tennis Meet @ 8:00- Rose Park: Abilene
- 7 Boys and Girls Golf District Round 1 in Baird @ 5:00-There
- 8 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Stamford @ 5:00 - There
- 8 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Baird @ 5:00 - There
- 9 Boys and Girls Golf District Round 2 in Burkburnett @ 8:30
- 10 Boys and Girls District Track Meet in Albany
- 11 Varsity Girls Softball vs. Baird @ 4:00 - There
- 11 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Gordon @ 5:00 - Here
- 14 Varsity Boys Baseball vs. Ranger @ 5:00 - Here

AHS True Life: Into a culture of crime

Cafeteria manager describes working inside a hostile environment

BY KATHRYN HAMILTON
Assistant Editor

Imagine this life: 12-hour shifts, serving pedophiles, and breaking up gang fights; just a few of the former duties required of cafeteria manager Joann Estridge.

Giving up her sheltered life in Albany, Estridge left her job in the school system and decided to work in a completely different atmosphere. Rambunctiously hungry junior high and high schoolers were no longer in her line, but rather a line of intimidating criminals.

"I started working in the school system and substituting in 1992, and then I worked full time in the cafeteria from 1993 to 1998," Estridge said. "I left in 1998 to cook and later on guard at the Robertson Unit in Abilene."

At the time, Estridge still had children at the high school, but she saw the job as a good opportunity.

"After all of my kids were able to drive, I didn't feel that I needed to work in the school and could make more money," Estridge said. "My kids thought it was scary and wondered why I took it when I was capable of doing other things. However, my friends were out there and said it was a good job that paid well. They were right, but it took a lot out of me."

Before heading to the Robertson Unit, Estridge had to complete a six-week training session with over 800 other trainees in Corpus Christi.

"The training prepared me, but unless I had been around gangs before, there was no way for me to be fully prepared for what I was going into," Estridge said.

Imagine that first day. The fear. The shock.

"When I first got there, I was scared to death," Estridge said. "It was very overwhelming and intimidating. I was around all these men who had committed rape, murder, robbery and other crimes. I

was seeing a completely different culture I had never even remotely been around."

New workers were targets for many inmates.

"Just as inmates would bet on newcomers in Shawshank Redemption, they also bet on the new workers at Robertson – which ones would make it and which ones wouldn't. They would say to me, 'Well, we didn't think you'd still be here.' My response was, 'Well I am, and you're going to do what you are supposed to do.'"

Not only did they make bets, but they had intimidation tactics that proved to have an effect.

"When I first started, there were about 60 other new workers along with me. By the end of the week there were only 10 to 12 of us left," Estridge said. "We had been told not to act intimidated. If we did, inmates would pick it up right away. If any prisoners tried to put us down, we had to stand up to them. However, the threats did affect many workers. Some inmates threatened to put their families on hit lists and such. They could intimidate us to the point where we did want to leave. It just wouldn't be worth it."

However, Estridge beat the odds. Everyday she traveled to Abilene and did her duty.

"I started out in the cafeteria. I was in charge of food preparation which involved checking out knives and all of the equipment, and making sure inmates were not smuggling food," Estridge explained. "Everyday I would get there and do a count, and they all had schedules to

adhere to. Those working with me in the kitchen had to be non-violent, and each had his own task."

With a large number of criminals all gathered at meals, fights were practically inevitable.

"I remember one of the fights in the chow hall where an inmate was killed. The prison shut the doors and locked you in there. Even if you're working, you are locked in and you can't get out," Estridge said.

If there is anything Estridge can for sure take away from her experience at the prison, it's her stories. Stories for days.

"My second week on the job, I pulled up in the parking lot and all of a sudden there was a loud noise coming from the building. I mean there was a roar," Estridge explained. "All I could hear was this roar, and I couldn't imagine what was happening inside. I considered calling in sick because I was so scared, yet I decided to go on in."

The cause of the loud uproar was not at all what Estridge expected.

"When I went in I asked, 'Why is it so noisy? Everyone is screaming and yelling,' They said, 'Oh, it's only the Dallas Cowboys game – no big deal,'" Estridge said.

As time went on, Estridge became more accustomed to her everyday work: the daily counting, the everyday stories, the everyday ma-

nipulation attempts by inmates.

"Whenever we counted groups, we had to make sure the diversity was equal. Equal number of Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, and Asians," Estridge said. "If one race had more than one of the others, there was going to be a fight. They all had competing gangs, and if one group outnumbered the other, that group was going to 'whoop' them."

After all of the fights she witnessed – the bashed-in heads, the inmates in it for the benefits, the drug addicts, the gangs, the line of men she saw everyday wasting their lives – Estridge was mentally exhausted.

"Everyday was just dealing with people whose lives revolve around them doing what they want to do," Estridge said. "They were always wanting something for nothing. Every one of them was different, yet they all seemed the same. Even if they did get out, over 50 percent of them came back in."

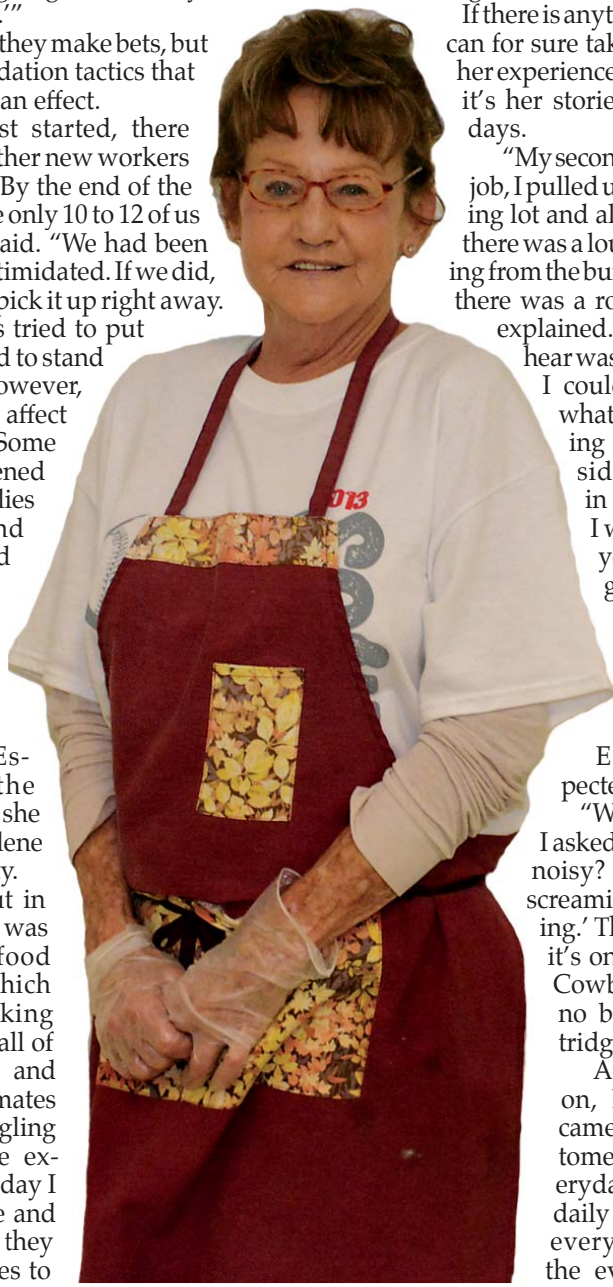
Eleven years, six months, and three days. After 11 years, six months, and three days, she was done.

Retiring from the prison system in 2010, she then went to work for the Shackelford County Sheriff's office as a dispatcher and a jailor. Within a year, she decided she needed a complete change in setting. In 2012 Estridge returned to the school system and was back in the cafeteria by 2013.

"It was so nice getting out from all of the negativity and watching people waste their lives. Watching them get out and then going straight back to the same old crimes," Estridge said. "But at the school, I get to enjoy being around them because they are just kids. It's actually refreshing."

As refreshing as kids are to her now, her experiences at the prison changed the way she views her surroundings and also taught her important things for life.

"If there is one thing I took away from working in the prison, it's knowing that if you ever have trouble, get a great lawyer, pay your probation officer, and do whatever you need to stay out of the system. It is just not where you want to be," Estridge said. "There is a whole other world out there. It made me stronger, but it also took a toll on me. It's a cruel world out there and I'm glad I live in a place that insulates me from it."



True love still possible in smaller ponds

Options can be limited in small towns, schools

BY MOLLY LEE
Feature Editor

When fishing in a small pond, there are only so many fish to be caught. The chances of finding the perfect one is sometimes far fetched. And the locals who know the pond well have learned that sometimes patience brings the perfect catch, while others give up and move on to bigger ponds.

Dating within a small school has its limitations. Some lucky ones find someone to spend their time with; others choose to look outside of Albany to date people who go to different schools.

"Since our school and town are so small, it is really difficult to date since you know everything about everybody," junior Rachel Kitchens said. "That can be a good and bad thing."

Kitchens, who is dating someone from Albany, began to see one of her peers in a different light one day.

"I always thought of Justin Jones as a wild child and was never really interested in dating him," Kitchens said. "One day he called me pretty and I fell in love. A month later we were dating, and we've been together for two years now."

Junior Steve Phillips has a similar story with his girlfriend Sierra Price.

"Honestly, I never thought I would date Sierra," Phillips said. "One day I just looked at her and told myself, 'I want to date this girl,' and she has been a huge blessing ever since."

Price thinks a "maturing" in Phillips changed her mind about him.

"I've known him forever, but he started acting more mature, started being more responsible, and was portraying the Christian morals that I was looking for in a boyfriend," Price said. "Living in a small school helped me to already know him, but also to get to know a whole new side to him."

Price and Phillips find plenty of opportunities to share each other's company.

"We have the same group of friends, so it's easy to hang out with our friends and still be together," Price said. "This helps me know every part of Steve's life which is good."

Phillips enjoys the privilege of see-



Junior Rachel Kitchens and Senior Justin Jones stroll down the hallway together towards their next class. The couple has been dating for over two years and hope to continue even as Jones heads off to college next semester. PHOTO BY MOLLY LEE

ing Price everyday, too.

"I get to see Sierra for the whole day mostly every day," Phillips said. "It helps us grow so much closer, and it helps us get to know each other better. Every time I see her and hear her voice, it makes my day better."

Through getting to know each other better, Phillips has learned some of his favorite things about Price.

"Sierra is just a beautiful girl with a great but awkward personality which really makes me laugh," Phillips said. "She always puts people before herself, and I absolutely love that about her. But one of my favorite things about her is her awkwardness. When people talk to her, she does the goofiest stuff, and it makes me smile."

Phillips does see down sides to dating someone from Albany though.

"When I'm having a bad day, I don't want to see or talk to anyone, and Sierra isn't very amused by me ignoring her," Phillips said.

Price forgets how "lucky she is to see Phillips everyday."

"Sometimes you forget to value the time you spend together since you see them everyday," Price said. "Even when you're not hanging out

with them, you will probably see them around town somewhere."

Kitchens thinks seeing her boyfriend daily is an advantage, but also a disadvantage to living in Albany.

"There's not a need to plan every weekend to see each other, and if you need anything, they are there," Kitchens said. "But you also HAVE to see them all the time. Sometimes I can't hang out with my friends because Justin wants to see me and knows that he can."

The same act of balancing priorities is a struggle for Price.

"Time management is a struggle," Price said. "You don't know sometimes whether you need to do school work, choose between hanging out with your friends or your boyfriend, and spending time with your family."

Freshman Michaela Reames is dating a boy from a different school.

"It's difficult to date in a small school because you don't have many options to choose from," Reames said. "Most of the guys are your best friends and are like your brothers."

Reames sees advantages and disadvantages to long distance relationships.

"If you can't drive yet, it makes it really difficult," Reames said. "I think distance is good because they don't see you when you look gross. It helps us stay together, because we look forward to seeing each other and value the time you spend together more since you only get to see them once a week."

Sophomore Carley Price is also committed to a long distance relationship.

"Distance has definitely caused some problems in my relationship because we can't always stop what we're doing to see each other which is hard at times," Carley Price said.

Carley Price shares what helps her boyfriend and her stay together.

"We prioritize seeing each other almost every Saturday or Sunday, but during the weekdays we talk on the phone," Carley Price said. "I made sure to go to his football games and plan on attending all of his baseball games that I can."

Carley has found many plus sides to dating a boy from a different town.

"You not only form a relationship with whomever you're dating, but you also meet other people and form friendships with them," Carley Price said.

Kitchens believes you can stay together easier based on being together on a daily basis.

"You are already around that person everyday and there is less suspicion of things that usually happen between couples dating long distance like cheating and lying to each other," Kitchens said. "If I lie to Justin about what I'm doing, he's going to see me riding around or cheating on my diet while eating at Dairy Queen. One time I couldn't even get away with sneaking to Breckenridge to eat at McDonald's with my friends instead of hanging out with him."

Sierra Price said living in the same town helps.

"You learn how to work through problems better, so I think that's an advantage and will help us stay together," She said.

Carley Price, on the other hand, doesn't believe distance affects whether a couple stays together or not.

"Hunter and I have had our ups and downs, but I knew from the moment I met him that no matter how far apart we were, I would always find a way to make things work," Carley Price said. "He means that much to me."

Track team sprints towards goal

Runners want to return trip to region, state

BY CURRY WILSON
Staff Writer

As spring sports start to roll around, track and field participants are eager to get started on the new season. Counting down the days, both the boys' and girls' track coaches are already making goals for their teams.

"We became competitive in the last four years, so my goal is to remind them where we've been and that I don't expect anything less," boys' head track coach Rod Britting said.

Like the boys, the girls are working just as hard to achieve their goals.

"My goal this year is to get a district team championship," Ginger Norton, girls' head track coach, said.

Losing several seniors last year, Britting is excited for some new faces.

"It's going to be good seeing the underclassmen fill up the spots that the seniors took over last year,"



Sophomore Levi Britting works on his pole vaulting technique. The track team will travel to Hamlin to compete on February 21. PHOTO BY CURRY WILSON

Britting said.

As one of the new faces this year, junior Steve Phillips is eager for the season to start.

"Last year I couldn't do track because I was getting caught up in baseball and from going from track practice to baseball practice was a lot to handle, and I just really wanted to focus on baseball," Phillips said.

Moving up from junior high, Freshman Rachel Hill is excited about the season.

"It's going to be more competition since it's not junior high, so I will be more nervous," Hill said. "My competition is going to be Kami Norton because she has been doing it for four years, so I am going to have to work harder every practice."

Returning this year for another chance to make it to the state meet, sophomore Levi Britting, a pole-vaulter, is working hard toward his goal.

"My goal this year is to go back to state and to jump over 14 feet. My competition, who is also my teammate, is going to be tough to beat because he is just as good as me," Britting said.

Also returning for a shot at her

fourth state title, state record holder Kami Norton has plans to get back to Austin.

"Now that I have a goal to go run at college, I need to push more at every practice and meet," she said.

Coach Norton said she enjoys coaching her daughter.

"I can calm her down when she gets nervous, but I'm usually the one with the nerves. I get nervous on her hurdles, but it has been fun," she said.

Loving the company of her mother at meets, Kami is sad that this is her last year to run for her.

"I'm really going to miss high school track; it is going to be sad not having that luxury of running for my mom," she said.

As the only senior on the boys' team, Lewis Kelly has a lot of eyes watching him.

I feel that this year is going to be my turn to step up for the team and be a good example for the underclassmen," Kelly said.

Happy to be a senior, Kelly is not ready to run his last race.

"It's going to be bittersweet because I know that I would have just put everything out there and I tried my best, but it's going to be hard because I am a senior this year."

Tennis, golf prepare for season

Spring sports swing into action to ready for district

BY CONOR WILSON
Assistant Editor

As the spring rolls around, the tennis team swings into action to prepare themselves for a successful season.

Losing six seniors off the team from last year, head tennis coach Sarah Wilson will have younger athletes to work with this season.

"This will most definitely be a rebuilding year for us," Wilson said. "Our goal for this year is to qualify for the Regional tournament."

In 2013, the Albany tennis team had Regional Qualifiers in both boys' singles and girls' doubles as well as district champions for the girls' and runner-up for the boys' division.

"We have a very competitive tournament schedule to give us the competition we need for district," Wilson said. "Our tournaments include Hawley, Jim Ned, Mineral Wells, and Abilene High."

Two of the three seniors on the team, Lexie Lee and Lexi Hudson pair up in girls' doubles hoping

to repeat a successful last season.

"We want to succeed in district by rising up to the challenges we will have to face," Hudson said. "We know that setting high goals requires working hard in practice everyday and being as committed as possible."

Lee played girls' singles last year and is thrilled to be partnered with Hudson.

"I like playing with someone else because it feels like someone always has your back," Lee said. "Also, it takes a lot of pressure off of you since you're not the only one on the team."

Not only have they set goals as a team of two, Lee and Hudson have personal goals as well.

"I'm looking forward to improving my game and just going out there with the will to win," Lee said.

"I'm sad I'm a senior, but I couldn't be more excited to be ending this last season with my partner," Hudson said. "I know we will both be successful no matter what."

Wilson has high expectations for this year's competitors.

"As a coach, I expect my players to find the extra time it takes to improve their game," Wilson said. "Tennis isn't just a sport you play in high school; you can compete in tennis throughout your life. It's a lifetime sport just like golf."

Tennis is not the only sport

swinging into action during the spring. The golf team is hoping to be driving toward success this year as well.

Junior Kaylee Waters is excited for the upcoming season.

"Golf is such a great sport to play," Waters said. "I love playing it because all of my family is involved with the game."

As one of the most experienced player with three years on the team, Waters is expected to be a leader.

"I'm excited to be the one player everyone looks up to," Waters said. "I love helping anyone I possibly can."

Even though Waters has experience, she still would like to improve her game.

"I want to improve my short game when I get to the green," Waters said. "That is one of the many goals I have set for myself this year."

Not only are there incoming freshmen playing this year, but a new coach as well. Sixth grade math teacher Angela Askew is the new girls' golf coach.

"I decided to be the golf coach for the girls last summer when Mr. Hill approached me," Askew said. "I have enjoyed giving golf lessons in the past and thought this would be a good opportunity to help the girls' golf team."

Being new to the program, Askew will face some challenges.

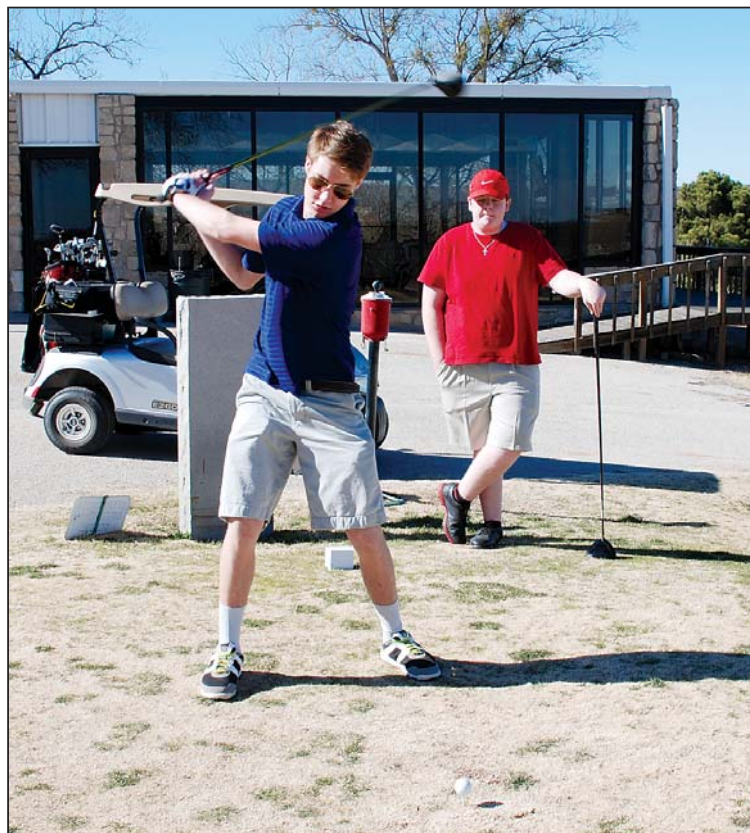
"I feel like the most difficult

obstacle in teaching golf is to help students learn to not get caught up in their emotions," Askew said. "Golf is an extremely frustrating sport and learning to move past your bad shots and focus on the remainder of the

round is key to being successful."

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Askew uses past experience to instruct new golf team

BY MICHAEL COTTER
Staff Writer

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Runners want to return trip to region, state

BY CURRY WILSON
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"We became competitive in the last four years, so my goal is to remind them where we've been and that I don't expect anything less," boys' head track coach Rod Britting said.

Like the boys, the girls are working just as hard to achieve their goals.

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Losing several seniors last year, Britting is excited for some new faces.

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Sophomore Levi Britting works on his pole vaulting technique. The track team will travel to Hamlin to compete on February 21. PHOTO BY CURRY WILSON

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Tennis is not the only sport

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Junior Kaylee Waters is excited for the upcoming season.

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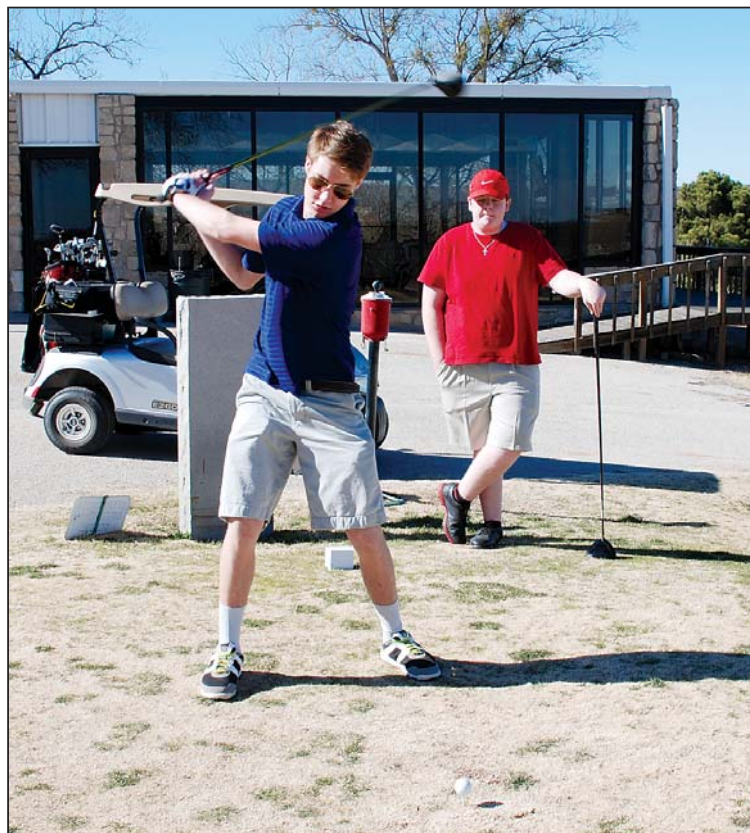
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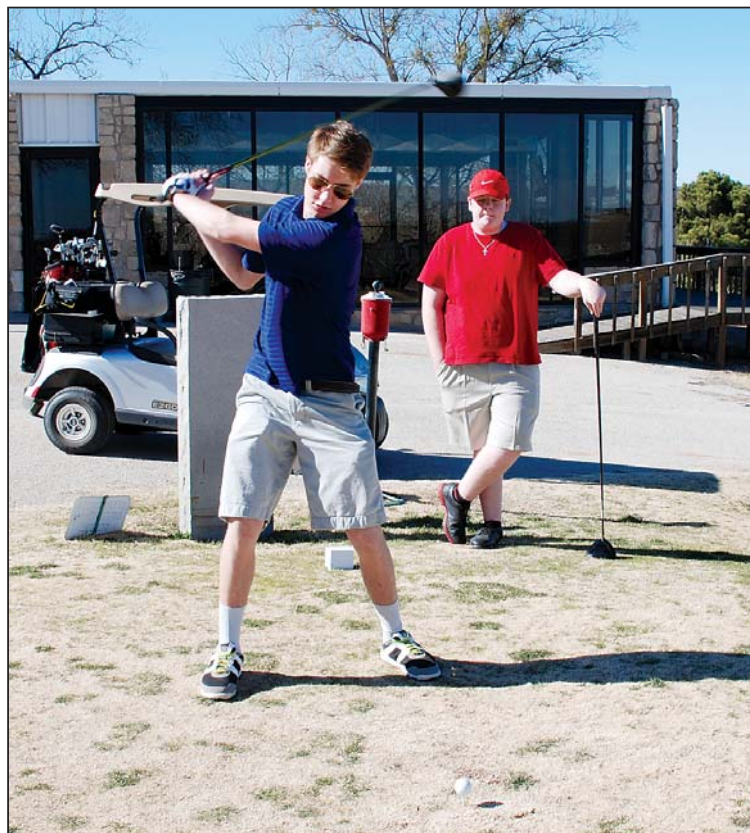
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