



THE LIONS ROAR

"Lion pride in print"

Monday, May 23, 2016

ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL

ALBANY, TEXAS 76430

VOLUME 14 NUMBER 6

Students consider college athletics



Senior athletes discuss college-level athletics, intramural sports in future. — See page 6

Seniors give parting advice



Graduating students give helpful advice to underclassmen for senior year. — See page 8

Baseball continues



Baseball team advances in playoffs by defeating May and McCamey. — See page 7

Briefs

Graduation plans finalized

A total of 37 students are graduating from Albany High School this year. The graduation ceremony is scheduled for Friday, May 27, at the Albany High School gym at 7:00 p.m. Graduates will be receiving diplomas, scholarships, and awards. The ceremony will also include music and speakers, with a reception following at the Whitney Theatre. Family, friends, teachers, and other guests are invited to attend. Project Graduation will be held that evening for graduates and ushers.

Finals schedule set

Final exams for the spring semester are scheduled this week. Students are required to take a minimum of two core class exams, as well as any exams for classes in which requirements are not met.

High school students who are exempt from taking exams must sign in at the office by 9:30 a.m. each day. Junior high students are required to stay the entire day and will stay in the gym when not testing.

The exam schedule is as follows:
Tuesday, May 24
8:00 a.m. – 1st period
10:00 a.m. – 2nd period
1:00 p.m. – 3rd period

Wednesday, May 25
8:00 a.m. – 4th period
10:00 a.m. – 5th period
1:00 p.m. – 6th period

Thursday, May 26
8:00 a.m. – 7th period
10:00 a.m. – 8th period

Two-a-days to begin in August

Two-a-day workouts for football, volleyball, and cross country will begin Monday, August 1 at 8:00 a.m. Students are required to have a physical examination prior to workouts.

Physicals were offered free of charge prior to the end of the school year. Students still needing a physical will be responsible for the cost of one during the summer. Athletes will receive a letter during the summer containing more information.



Scan QR code to lead to the SchoolWay app which can be used for both iPhone or Android.

Dual credit offering expands

College level social studies classes added

BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD
Features Editor

In order to give students additional dual-credit options other than math or science, the board has decided to add Government/Economics and U.S. History dual-credit courses as options starting in the fall.

"My hope is that these new dual-credit courses will challenge students in an academic area where there have not previously been honors options," counselor Dee Dee Waggoner said.

The district, in collaboration with Cisco College, has offered dual-credit courses in English Composition, College Algebra, Elementary Statistics, Anatomy and Physiology, Biology, Psychology, and Sociology.

"Dual-credit courses allow students to earn college credits at a discounted price

and help them get a step ahead once they enter college full time," Waggoner said. "However, I encourage students to do their research before choosing which dual-credit courses they'd like to take."

According to Waggoner, students and their parents often mistakenly think taking every dual-credit course offered is necessary.

"Students only need to take courses that apply to their intended major and academic strengths," Waggoner said. "They also need to check with the college they will attend after high school, if they have decided that, to make sure which credits they will accept."

Waggoner said she recommends students do "serious self-reflection before deciding" which and how many dual-credit courses to take.

"Students must ask themselves how much time and effort they are willing to devote to these courses," Waggoner said. "These courses are a financial investment, and the grades are the first ones to go on



Counselor Dee Dee Waggoner talks with sophomore Elise Brown about taking dual credit courses next year. A meeting with parents and students was held Thursday, May 19 to answer questions about the courses.

PHOTO BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD

college transcripts. Only those who truly desire a challenge and who are dedicated should undertake them."

Sophomore Shelby Snead, who will begin her dual-credit experience next school year, says she is up to the task.

"I'm not really worried about classes being overwhelming or difficult at all," Snead said. "It's great that a school this small is offering dual-credit classes, because even though the

college-level courses aren't free, they're less expensive than they would be if I took them later on at a university."

Financial aid opportunities are available to those who wish to take dual-credit classes.

"Texas provides grant money solely for dual-credit classes," Waggoner said. "Qualifying students can receive help via the Texas Public Education Grant, which has no effect on future aid as a full-time

college student."

Senior Carley Price, who has completed 23 hours of college through dual-credit classes, says that, despite the difficulties that accompany it, she is thankful for the opportunity she was given to save money and shorten the amount of time she will have to spend in college.

"Taking college-level courses in high school is really stressful, but well worth it in the end," Price said.

Newspaper earns 4 'Tops in Texas'



The Lions Roar staff poses for a picture outside the LBJ Library at the University of Texas at Austin campus with their Silver Star award. The group traveled to Austin for the Interscholastic League Press Conference and received several awards including four 'Tops in Texas' awards, along with many individual honors. PHOTO PROVIDED

Roar receives 11th Star Award

BY NOLAN DAVIS
Staff Writer

The Lions Roar had another successful trip to the Interscholastic League Press Conference on April 16-17.

ILPC is a yearly convention for school newspapers and yearbooks across the state of Texas. The event is held in Austin, and students have the opportunity to listen to professionals from across the country give them tips to becoming a better journalist. The convention also gives out awards for the best writers, photographers and designers, as well as publications.

The workshop sessions can give students ideas for improving their skills.

"I think that ILPC has

SEE "ILPC" Pg 8

UIL to compete at state meet

Five students advance to Austin meet

BY NOLAN DAVIS
Staff Writer

Several students participating in UIL advanced from regionals to the State Academic Meet, set for May 24.

A total of five students will compete in Austin, including the science team and individual editorial writing.

"It feels good to be able to succeed in academics," junior Hunter Owen, a member of the science team, said. "Albany is mainly known for sports, so it is nice to be able to represent our school academically."

Senior Levi Britting, who advanced to state last year, is also excited to be able to get

another chance to go with the science team.

"I'm very glad that my work has paid off," Britting said. "I'm also glad that my team gets to go compete with me."

For others, it's a second chance.

"I participate in UIL Editorial Writing," senior Lori Davis said. "Last year I didn't make it out of district in that event, so it's a big accomplishment and honor to advance all the way to state."

UIL gives students an opportunity to grow academically and compete against other students, but it can also help in the classroom.

"Some events have given me tips for school," Britting said. "Being in Number Sense has given me some new shortcuts for math problems. If I wasn't

in that event I wouldn't have learned some of those tricks."

UIL can also help with your motivation to compete against other students and increase your knowledge base.

"UIL has pushed me to increase my knowledge," Owen said. "When I compete in UIL, I push myself to compete to the best of my ability so I can advance. I also push myself to learn new things which can help in the classroom."

UIL can help students get extra opportunities to learn new things.

"I compete in UIL because I like to push myself academically," Davis said. "It gives me many chances to do more work and learn more than I do in the classroom at school."

UIL can help in high school, but it can also help



Senior Lori Davis reviews an editorial prompt for the UIL regional competition. Davis placed third, advancing to the state meet set for May 24. PHOTO BY NOLAN DAVIS

later in life, either in college or at a job.

"Since I made it to state, I'm eligible for some extra scholarships," Britting said. "Because I'm going to college next year, I'm always happy to get a chance to get more scholarships."

UIL can also help with life skills.

"Editorial writing has helped me become a better writer," Davis said. "I have had to write about different topics that push me out of my comfort zone."

Students who compete in UIL have to give up many hours of their time to practice

SEE "UIL" Pg 8

Editorials

Staying in shape

Summer is right around the corner and many students are probably looking forward to a relaxing few months free from school and athletics. Warm temperatures, swimming, and vacation are at the top of the priority lists.

Although summer is a break for students, it will benefit athletes to attend summer workouts.

The first reason athletes should attend summer workouts is to stay in shape. It is easy to lounge by the pool with an ice-cold glass of lemonade all summer, but there will be a price to pay. Students who take a break in the summer are the ones who suffer the most when two-a-days roll around.

Attending morning workouts also builds team camaraderie. Students are able to spend six weeks together preparing for the upcoming season. This gives the team a head start when two-a-days come because they have been around each other and have formed a bond.

Finally, many athletes who don't attend morning workouts say that they will work out on their own, but that rarely happens. The students who say this often put off working out, waking up a week before two-a-days only to realize that they have done absolutely nothing all summer. Working out one week before two-a-days will not fix anything because it is impossible to get in shape that fast.

Some students do not attend morning workouts because of the 7:00 am start. Although that is early, it gives students the rest of the day to work, relax, or hang out with friends.

There are always two groups of people at two-a-days. One group (the athletes who attended morning workouts) is able to handle the workouts without dying and being painfully sore for weeks. The other group (the athletes who sat around all summer) is off to the side suffering from muscle cramps and puking their guts up. Attending morning workouts will keep athletes in shape and prepare them for two-a-days.

Thankful for memories

As I write my final editorial, I realize that my time here is coming to a close. When I look back at the last 13 years that I have attended Albany Schools, my heart is filled with nothing but gratitude. We are truly blessed with the greatest faculty that has helped to make my time as an Albany student something I will never forget.

First of all, I would like to thank the teachers. One trait that all of our teachers seem to possess is selflessness. I can't even begin to count the number of times I went to Mr. Norton's room before a big biology test, or the calculus problems Mr. Davis has helped me solve. All of the teachers really care about their students, and it shows in the hard work and dedication they put into teaching us.

Secondly, I would like to thank the coaches. Although I have only played softball, volleyball, and basketball in high school, it is easy to see how hard all of our coaches work. Whether they are breaking down film, drawing up new plays, creating new drills, or just thinking about the upcoming game, our coaches go above and beyond the job description.

Finally, I would like to thank the rest of the staff and administration. From the maintenance crew, to the office workers, to the school board, everyone does their part in making this school district succeed.

I will miss so many things about this school. I will miss saying "hi" to Humberto and Chincho as I walk by them in the hall, practicing softball with Coach Fuentes, and learning from all of the teachers. Thanks to the entire faculty, the last 13 years have been something that I will never forget.



THE
LIONS ROAR
ILPC 2016 Silver Star Winner
ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL

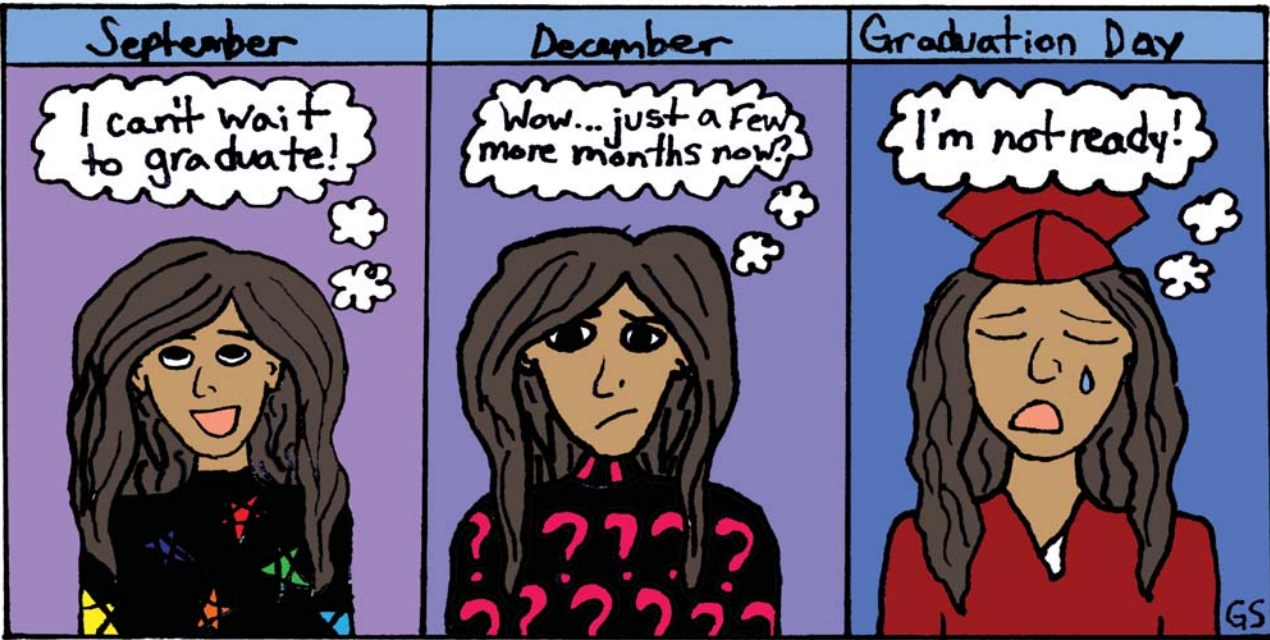
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Becoming a lost generation

I feel as though the people in my generation wake up every morning with one thing on their mind: what people think of them. We're a very selfish generation; we like to be liked and we feel the need to receive confirmation from others rather than from ourselves, or better yet, from Christ. We look for attention in all

the wrong places, like through relationships and social media. Everyone is a slave to red hearts and retweets...but there's got to be something more than finding the perfect edit on a "selfie" in order for people to like you.

I often wonder what life would be like if cell phones and websites had never been invented. I think that without these devices we might actually put some meaning back into our lives. Friendships and relationships might actually have value, and families might be able to hold a conversation at the dinner table.

It breaks my heart that we feel like the only way we

feel validated is if we hit 150 likes, or someone comments with heart eye emojis on the Instagram pictures we post. In all honesty, it's kind of pathetic. We openly share our entire lives with complete strangers when we post online, and yet we still wonder why there is an alarming rise in the number of abductions and stalking happening to teens and young adults.

All I know is that we need to get a grip on reality before it's too late. There are actual proven disorders for people who are addicted to being on their phone. Is that not a little frightening to anyone?

Like I said before, our generation, and even the generation before us, are so caught up in putting on a façade of what they think their "perfect life" should look like on social media, rather than accepting that life can be a mess, period. It's a beautiful, crazy, challenging, wonderful mess, and we only get one life... why spend it behind a screen?

Newspaper will never die

Over the past four years, I have come to appreciate what we call "The Lions Roar." Just like sports, academics helped shape and mold my character; being in the school newspaper class honed my writing skills, organization skills, and my overall social skills (not that I needed any help according to some people).

Newspaper is a sport to me. It pushed me out of my comfort zone by making me talk to adults and hold a conversation. The last few seconds of an intense basketball game is just like a deadline. You have to hurry and turn in your story before the last buzzer goes off, which brings me to my next point. Just like practicing for "the big game" you have to work hard in newspaper. Once you step through the door and walk into the newspaper room, game on. You don't think about anything else or talk about anything else, and if you get out of line, your coach, Mr. Lucas, will chew you up and spit you out just like any other coach would. Trust me, I know.

Despite the tough times and the hard work, the outcome is so much sweeter. Not only do we, as a staff, get the honor of traveling to Austin for the annual ILPC convention, but it's also nice to win awards for our hard work. From our yearly Christmas parties to being in the newsroom everyday, our staff is like a team. We work together and rely on each other to get everything done correctly, because if one pica is out of place, then the entire paper is out of place.

Lastly, I will forever appreciate my "coach," Mr. Lucas. Sure he pesters me and pinches me (yes, pinches me). He expected the best out of me and basically taught me how to write. Newspaper taught me to have a voice and to give a voice to the people who don't. It taught me that everyone and everything has a story. I will definitely carry my newspaper skills into the next chapter of my life, and will be forever grateful to say that I'm a part of "The Lions Roar."

Being last can be lonely

As new seasons come and go in the NFL, NBA, MLB and other major sports, loyal fans root for their teams no matter the outcome. Cowboy fans stuck it out through one of the worst years in team history. Bronco's fans got to see their team make it all the way to the Super Bowl and win. Everyone knows that person, (if you don't, it is you) who is a fanatic about his or her favorite team. They know everything there is to know about their team. As annoying as these fans can be, there is a type of fan that causes even more distress: a bandwagon fan.

According to the Urban Dictionary, a bandwagon fan "is anyone who claims they are a 'fan' of a particular team, even though they had no prior support for or interest in the team until they started winning. These fans usually only show playoff interest and have probably never watched a regular season game, and only know one or two players. They usually buy a jersey or something of the only player they know."

So what makes these fans so aggravating? I found that almost all students despise the fair weather fans. "I do not like them because they act like they are real fans, but a true fan is one who has stayed with their team win or lose," senior Drew

Neece said. "These vagabonds take away from the authenticity of the fan base."

While nobody seemed to have sympathy for these types of fans, some admit to rooting for good teams. "I did root for the Heat when they were good," senior Alex Faith said. "It was fun to watch them, and I wanted them to win, but I didn't try to make it widely known. I didn't buy Heat merchandise. I admit I was bandwagoning a little, but I can't stand the ones who say that they have always been fans."

"I think it's dumb to just like the teams that are good," sophomore Henry Kelly said. "I've always been a Mavericks fan, and you've just got to stick with them through thick and thin. I don't try to say I root for other teams, and I find the kids who do extremely aggravating."

In conclusion, I think that you must pick your team and stay loyal. It is okay to root for other teams occasionally during the playoffs if your team is out, as long as you don't make claims like, "I've always been a fan."

This season the two biggest bandwagons seemed to be the University of Oklahoma and the Golden State Warriors. You know who you are.



GARDNER SEEDS
by KYLEA GARDNER



REDHEADED RANTS
by CURRY WILSON



MIKE'S MOMENTS
by MICHAEL COTTER



2¢ worth

What are your summer plans?

"I'm going to the beach."

Derek Isbell
Freshman



"This summer I'm going to Disneyland."

Lindsey Lucas
Sophomore



"I'm going to work all summer."

Jake Green
Junior



"This summer I'm going to be busy with work and school."

Jenna Phillips
Senior



Reading: pleasure or pain?

Opinions vary over importance of reading

BY HENRY KELLY
Entertainment Editor

Many students have different opinions when it comes to reading and how it fits into their daily schedule.

For some students, reading can take up most of their day. For others, reading is just an occasional pastime. Others don't see the need to even crack the cover of a book.

"I read every day, whenever I have free time," sophomore John Munoz said. "If I'm not doing schoolwork, I am reading."

Munoz, who often reads a book in a single day, says reading has changed how he acts.

"Reading makes me more of a solitary person," Munoz said. "I don't really talk to people as much when I have a book to read."

Munoz has found the right type of books for him.

"I like books with a lot of fighting," Munoz said. "Fast-paced books keep me interested even though my attention span is short."

Reading also helps students keep their minds active.

"It stretches your vocabulary and the way your mind thinks," Munoz said.

Freshman Cody Waddell doesn't focus on the educational part of reading.

"I hear people say reading makes you smarter, but I don't know if it is true," Waddell said. "I just like doing it."

Waddell has a system when it comes to finding books he likes.

"If I'm reading a book I don't like, I just stop," Waddell, who reads mostly science fiction, said. "If I finished a book, then I liked it. So I don't really have a favorite book."



Sophomore John Munoz checks out a book in the school library from librarian Karen Noble. Munoz has a love for reading, and often reads an entire book in one day. Many students do not share Munoz's love for reading and consider reading a burden and a waste of time.

PHOTO BY HENRY KELLY

Sophomore Kelton Parker works to find time to read.

"I try to read about 50 pages a week," Parker said. "It is just hard to find time to do it."

Parker enjoys books written in first person.

"I like to feel like I'm in the book," Parker said. "I like the feeling that I'm looking through the narrator's eyes."

However, Parker finds it hard to finish a book he likes.

"It makes me emotionally distressed when I finish a book," Parker said. "I am always disappointed that it is over."

Parker has a definite favorite when it comes to books.

"I really like *Noggin* by John Corey Whaley," Parker said. "It is unique compared to any other book I've read. I never knew what was coming next."

Sophomore Dax Neece's favorite book is also *Noggin*.

"I think reading is boring, and I find it hard to get into books," Neece said. "But I did

like reading *Noggin*."

The book caught Neece's attention from the start.

"It was interesting from the very beginning," Neece said. "And I was interested for the rest of the book."

Neece finds getting AR points to be a burden.

"I don't like having a deadline to read my book," Neece said. "I usually have to cram all my reading in at the very end."

Although Munoz doesn't find AR to be a burden, he doesn't find it effective.

"It gets people to look at books," Munoz said. "But it doesn't keep them interested."

While it may be difficult, many students still find time to read.

"I find time to read every night," junior Jake Green said. "I like to picture what the book is saying in my head without distractions."

Green's favorite author is Gary Paulsen.

Some students also use reading as a way to fill their time.

"Reading keeps me from being bored," Munoz said. "It keeps my mind active."

Eighth-grader Trissy Morgan agrees.

"I am usually isolated in my room a lot, so I read," Morgan said. "Otherwise, if I'm not reading, I'm bored."

Morgan's favorite series is the *Inheritance Cycle*.

Unlike Morgan, junior Kaleigh Clevenger can't find time to read.

"I am too busy with school and sports to be able to read," Clevenger said. "That is why I wish we didn't have AR. To me, it's the worst part of school."

Clevenger finds reading to be a burden.

"I don't like reading because I'm dyslexic," Clevenger said. "I have to work to read, so it takes a lot of my time that I don't have to spare."

Clevenger has found a series

that suits her.

"I like *The Summer I Turned Pretty* series by Jenny Han," Clevenger said. "I like her writing style because it is easy to read and keeps me on my toes."

Clevenger's dislike of reading began at an early age.

"In kindergarten we had to take books home and read to our parents," Clevenger said. "The private school I went to made us take home books with Spanish in them and I never liked reading those."

Junior Grant Head finds reading to be a waste of time.

"There is no point to reading," Head said. "I could just watch the movie and waste much less time."

Junior Jordan Pleasant has mixed emotions when it comes to reading.

"When people force me to read, I don't really like it," Pleasant said. "But if I take the time to find my own book, I really enjoy reading it."

ROARING REVIEWS

The Boss
April 8, 2016 R 99 min
Comedy
Wealthy CEO Michelle Damell (Melissa McCarthy) always gets her way, until she's busted for insider trading and sent to federal prison. Luckily, after being released from prison, she tracks down former assistant Claire (Kristen Bell). While staying with Claire and her young daughter, the ex-con devises a new business model for a brownie empire.
Director: Ben Falcone
Writers: Melissa McCarthy, Will Ferrell
Stars: Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Bell
Staff Review: [4 stars]

The Huntsman: Winter's War
April 22, 2016 PG-13 123 min
Fantasy | Drama
Betrayed by her evil sister Ravenna (Charlize Theron), heartbroken Freya (Emily Blunt) retreats to a northern kingdom to raise an army of huntsmen. When Eric (Chris Hemsworth) and fellow warrior Sara defy this rule, the angry queen does whatever she can to stop them. As war between the siblings escalates, Eric and Sara unite with Freya to end Ravenna's wicked reign.
Director: Cedric Nicolas-Trovan
Writers: Evan Spiliotopoulos, Craig Mazin
Stars: Chris Hemsworth, Charlize Theron
Staff Review: [4 stars]

Captain America: Civil War
May 6, 2016 PG-13 147 min
Fantasy | Science Fiction
Political pressure mounts to install a system of accountability when the actions of the Avengers lead to collateral damage. Captain America (Chris Evans) believes superheroes should be free to defend humanity without government interference. Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.) sharply disagrees and supports oversight.
Director: Joe Russo, Anthony Russo
Writers: Christopher Markus, Stephen McFeely
Stars: Chris Evans, Robert Downey Jr.
Staff Review: [4 stars]

Mother's Day
April 29, 2016 PG-13 118 min
Drama | Comedy
Sandy (Jennifer Aniston) is a single mom who learns that her ex-husband is marrying a younger woman. Bradley is a widower (Jason Sudeikis) who's trying to raise two daughters on his own. When their respective problems start coming to a head, the Mother's Day holiday takes on a special meaning.
Director: Garry Marshall
Writers: Tom Hines, Anya Kochoff
Stars: Jennifer Aniston, Julia Roberts
Staff Review: [3 stars]

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

BY HENRY KELLY

The Jungle Book

In an adventurous attempt at remaking the 1967 original, the 2016 version of *The Jungle Book* was a complete success.

The film was more serious than the original, but still had the fun feel of the life in the jungle as Mowgli discovers a life with Baloo (Bill Murray).

Led by Bagheera (Ben Kingsley), Mowgli must escape from the infamous Shere Khan (Idris Elba).

Shere Khan, through only a few short scenes, made me hate him and continue to root for Mowgli.

In the famous snake scene, Mowgli finds himself in a mysterious tree, and I could just feel it coming as I looked for any sign of Kaa (Scarlett Johansson). I felt like I was watching the 1967 version with a more modern touch.

I only found one mess-up in the full movie (though there may be more), and it wasn't too big. Mowgli has bee stings in one scene, and in the next scene, which was during the same day, they were gone. Other than that, the movie was very well done.

Although most movies just can't seem to make animals who talk look very convincing, The Jungle Book made it look pretty normal. I never really dwelled on the animals talking because it was so well done. I felt like they were just humans talking.

Watching the famous monkey scene (there are a lot of famous scenes), I didn't think it was similar to the original, but I didn't mind that. There were a

lot of parts in the movie similar to the first one, so a new take of the monkey scene was still interesting.

This movie is very enjoyable to watch. You will fall in love with the characters (well, most of them), and you probably already love the story.

It is a "bear necessity" to see this movie whether you loved the original or if you have never seen it.

and coming back to life only to find some depressing news, it has surprisingly had a lot of light-heartedness and comedy to it.

One of the many aspects of the book that keeps you reading is the attachment you make with Travis as you root for him to have his dreams realized.

Along with Travis, his fun and caring friends, Hatton and Kyle, and his "girlfriend", help make this book both entertaining and emotional. Throughout the story, Travis's friends are always looking out for Travis. The book may be in first person narrative, but the reader still becomes attached to the other characters because of all the things they do for Travis. Although I have only written about how much the characters care about Travis, Travis also cares about his friends as well, and even after five years without him, they are still the same friends they were before.

I realize that this book isn't all about the fact that he came back to life with another person's body, but that through the ups and downs of life (and death), your friends are always there for you. This book was recommended to me, and now I recommend it to you.

Noggin
by John Corey Whaley

After numerous recommendations, I finally read *Noggin* by John Corey Whaley and I was not let down.

The book revolves around a teenager named Travis who, after dying of cancer, had his head chopped off. Five years later he woke up with his head reattached to another teenager's body. He found that life was much different than when he left it.

By the time I finished reading, I felt as if the book began in a different life, and after all the revelations, formed into the final story of Travis's life... or lives.

For a book about a boy dying

Graduates prepare to extend education, embark on new journeys

Class of 2016 say their goodbyes

BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD
Feature Editor

In just a matter of days, the class of 2016 will be saying their final farewells to high school. Regardless of where their futures take them, these seniors will soon enter the realms of adulthood, flying away from the nest and into the real world.

Several seniors shared their thoughts on their upcoming graduation and what will follow.

Cason Asher said that though he may encounter difficult situations in college, he feels he will flourish in the face of adversity thanks to the way his parents raised him.

"They've taught me how to manage myself when it comes to money and peer pressure," he said. "I know my parents will be upset about me living four hours away, but they aren't worried. They've prepared me for adulthood and they know that."

Like Asher, Matthew Rupp said he and his family might feel a little distressed when he finally moves out to attend Abilene Christian University, which is only 30 minutes away.

"I've been living with my mom for 18 years; it's all I know, and suddenly that's going to change," Rupp said. "As for my mom, she may be used to the feeling of sending her kids off to college since I have an older sister, but I still think she'll cry when I finally go, because I'm her last baby."

In contrast, Maddison Alexander plans to live with her parents about a year before venturing out on her own.

"I'd like to slowly transition into adulthood," she said. "I enjoy discovering new things, but the idea of being separated from my parents worries me."

Alexander, who is aiming to become a chemical dependency counselor, said she hopes she will have a positive impact on the world.

"I've seen how destructive substance abuse can be firsthand, and I want to be able to help others with their addiction," she said. "It's something I'm very passionate about, and I'm excited that, after college, I'll be able to make a good impression on the world."

Kelsey Tollett shares Alexander's excitement for the future.

"I'm ready for a new chapter of my life," Tollett said. "My high school experience was fun yet very stressful at times, but that stress made me grow up, helped me learn to be myself, and, overall, taught me not to take things for granted. I'm ready for anything, now."

Kimberly Vickers said the most valuable thing she learned in high school was the importance of hard work.

"When I was an underclassman, my favorite teachers were the ones who were easy-going," Vickers said. "But now that I'm older, I realize it was the teachers who pushed me the hardest that were the best, because they were the ones who were preparing me for the real world, and I appreciate that."

Levi Britting said he's grateful for the lessons he learned not only in school, but also from the town itself.

"Living in Albany has given me the opportunity to cement my beliefs and participate in activities that helped me build leadership skills," Britting said. "I know that when I go to ASU, nobody will be able to sway me down the wrong path."

Caleb Masters, who will attend Austin College in Sherman, Texas this fall, shares similar views.

"Growing up and going to school here has been a great starting block for the rest of my life," he said.



TSTC
BRECKENRIDGE, TEXAS
Taylor Brooks, Maddison Alexander, Servando Rosales, and (not pictured) Zeke Martinez will attend Texas State Technical College.



Texas Tech
LUBBOCK, TEXAS
Curry Wilson and Nwt Koemel plan to attend Texas Tech University in the fall. Wilson will major in Public Relations, while Koemel plans to study animal science.



ACU
ABILENE, TEXAS
Tyler Miller and Matthew Rupp will attend Abilene Christian University in the fall. Miller will major in biblical text, while Rupp plans to study construction management/music.



UNDECIDED
Shelbie Alexander, Nita Perez, and Brittney Pruter



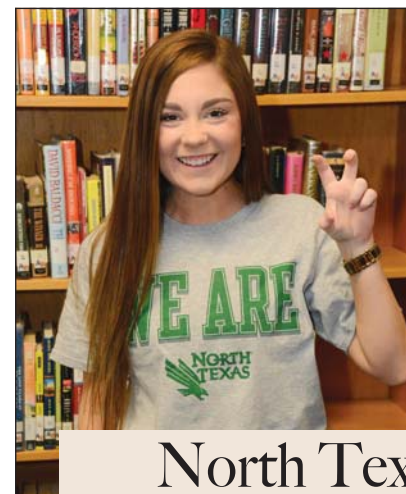
AIR FORCE
Damian Cox will begin basic training following graduation. Cox plans to join the Air Force.



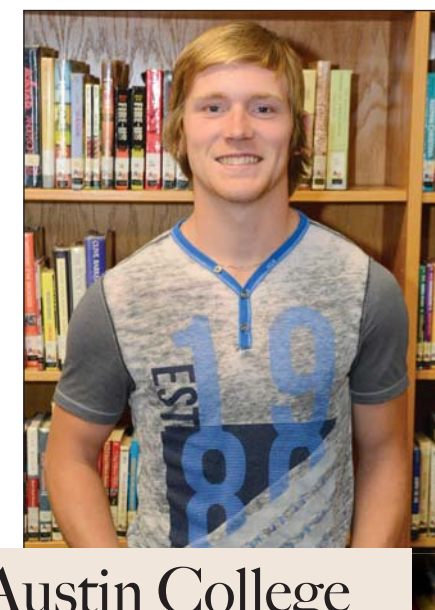
ARMY
After graduation Allen Granville will attend AIT in Georgia after graduation.



Weatherford College
WEATHERFORD, TEXAS
Kimberly Vickers will attend Weatherford College in the fall and pursue nursing.



North Texas
DENTON, TEXAS
Carley Price will attend the University of North Texas in the fall and major in fashion merchandising with a minor in business entrepreneurship.



Austin College
SHERMAN, TEXAS
Caleb Masters will attend Austin College in the fall and continue his athletic career on the Austin College football team.



Hardin Simmons
ABILENE, TEXAS
Tobi Nall plans to study physical therapy at Hardin Simmons this fall.



TCU
FORT WORTH, TEXAS
Lori Davis will attend Texas Christian University in the fall and major in Marketing.

TCC
FORT WORTH, TEXAS
Kaylynn Voyles will attend Tarrant County College and the Texas Academy of Dental Assisting in Fort Worth.



Cisco College
ABILENE/CISCO TEXAS
Ben Hawkins, Roberto Cecilio, Jenna Phillips, and Tatum Jenkins will attend Cisco College in the fall.



Tarleton State
STEPHENVILLE, TEXAS
Sarah Rogers, Tyler Conde, and Alex Faith will attend Tarleton in the fall. Rogers plan to major in nursing, and Conde and Faith will pursue agriculture.

Tyler Junior College
TYLER, TEXAS
Chelsi Freasier will attend Tyler Junior College in the fall and study nursing.



Angelo State
SAN ANGELO, TEXAS
Levi Britting, Savannah Perez, Kelsey Tollett, and Charles Carter will attend Angelo State University. Britting, Perez, and Carter plan to major in physical therapy. Tollett will study education.



Texas State
SAN MARCOS, TEXAS
Cason Asher will attend Texas State University in the fall and study radio, TV, and film.



Texas A&M
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS
Michael Cotter and Drew Neece will attend Texas A&M in the fall and room together. Cotter will major in business. Neece will major in engineering.

Grads face athletic crossroad

Seniors pursue alternate paths

BY BRIAN HAMILTON
Staff Writer

As local seniors prepare for a new life after graduation, many will leave one important aspect from the “glory days” of high school behind.

Gone will be the days of after-school workouts, pep rallies, running out of inflatable tunnels, hearing the roar of the crowd, team dinners, playoff games, trophy celebrations and much more.

They will now be focused on either the daily grind of going to jobs or sitting through college lectures or cramming for tests.

Gone for most will be the glory that was high school athletics – for most, but not all.

Only two seniors have actually signed to play a sport at the college level, but doesn’t mean that others will be able to completely walk away or turn their backs on athletics entirely.

“I will definitely try intramurals and see how I like it,” senior Drew Neece said. “My main reasons for participating are that I still love to compete, make friends, and stay in shape.”

Neece is fortunate to be able to share his plans with one of his good friends.

“I’m going to play intramurals with Drew,” senior Michael Cotter said. “Like him, I still like to compete.”

Though many people might completely turn away from their athletic careers, Neece and Cotter are still attempting big feats, even though it might be a long shot. The pair will be attending Texas A&M University in the fall.

“Michael and I are rooming together, and both of us are going to try to walk on the Aggie football team,” Neece said. “We know that it isn’t likely we will make



Senior Tobin Nall (above) fields a ball at shortstop. Senior Drew Neece (left) hands the ball off to senior running back Caleb Masters. Masters will continue his athletic career at Austin College, while Neece and Nall will not pursue college sports. PHOTOS BY KYLEA GARDNER AND RACHEL HILL

it, but we figured we have nothing to lose and will have some fun while trying out.”

Neece, like several other graduating seniors, was blessed with the opportunity to go down a variety of paths for his college

experience.

“I was a preferred walk on at ACU,” Neece said. “McMurry said I would be able to play there if I wanted to.”

Cotter shares the same ability.

“I could have high

jumped at some smaller schools if I wanted to,” Cotter said. “Stephen F. Austin contacted me last year about jumping for them.”

College football never seemed to be a serious path for Cotter.

“To get discovered you have to go to camps and be looked at, which I never did,” he said. “I wasn’t really all that interested.”

There are a variety of reasons for someone to choose not to continue an athletic career after high school, but for some it’s not a viable option.

“I just feel that college wouldn’t be the same as high school football. Plus it’d take a lot of hard work,” Neece said. “School is the bigger priority, so I figured I should put all of my focus on that.”

Cotter’s ideas also understand the degree of commitment required.

“If you do sports in college, then that’s all you do,” Cotter said. “It’d be more beneficial to focus on school.”

It was down to two options for Neece.

“I had to decide between going to ACU for football or going to A&M for school,” Neece said.

With state title appearances and some very prestigious accolades, it will be hard for Neece to let go of it all.

“I’m going to miss the beauties of high school football,” Neece said. “The lights, fans, touchdowns, practice with my brothers, and all the intangibles of the game.”

The spotlight is no stranger to Cotter either, having acquired his share of the limelight over the years and playing an important role in the success of the football team.

“There’s no doubt I will miss it,” Cotter said. “I’ve always loved the competition and playing for something more than just for the fun.”

Neece and Cotter are not the only ones who are going to miss high school athletics.

“I’ll miss all of it, of course,” senior Tobin Nall said. “It’s all I’ve done since I’ve gotten into high school, playing with the same people and having something to do everyday.”

Nall plans to find activities to help fill the gap left by high school sports.

“Intramurals sounds like it would be fun,” she said. “Hopefully, it will feel like high school sports did.”

Collegiate athletics has always been on Nall’s mind, even if there isn’t an opportunity.

“I didn’t get any offers or anything like that, but I had always thought about trying out for the softball team of whatever college I would choose to attend,” Nall said.

Though she has thought about playing college softball, Nall is now planning to use her time more wisely.

“I’m really just wanting to focus on my first year of college,” Nall said. “Not having to do extra stuff like sports, I think, will make things better.”

Seniors Levi Britting (Angelo State pole vault) and Caleb Masters (Austin College football) are the only athletes choosing to pursue their passions into college at this point.

“Pole vaulting has been fun to me,” senior Levi Britting said. “I’m very passionate about it and had the opportunity to vault collegiately, so I took it.”

The enjoyment of their high school experiences led both to continue at the next level.

“Football was such a good experience in high school,” senior Caleb Masters said. “I didn’t want it to end.”

With the new road ahead involving collegiate sports, both seniors are feeling the excitement.

“I’ll be nervous to be a freshman all over again,” Britting said. “Plus, the higher intensity of competition will make it all the more nerve racking.”

Masters’ emotions are coming from the other side of the spectrum.

“It’s so exciting,” Masters said. “I’ve always dreamed of playing college football, so I’m thrilled to have my dream come true.”

School board approves new sports gear

Under Armour becomes main apparel vendor

BY PARKER MOON
Staff Writer

For several years, Albany athletes have used a variety of clothing brands for uniformed team sports, but that all changed recently with a new agreement with Under Armour.

The new clothing deal was approved during the April 18 meeting of the Albany school board.

“Sophomore Brennan Abbate’s dad, Jim, is friends with the guy who oversees our area for Under Armour,” Athletic Director Kevin Hill said. “That was the main reason that they became interested in Albany.”

The three-year plan includes switching all the teams over to Under Armour uniforms and apparel.

“I think most of these big manufacturers make good quality material and uniforms,” football head coach Denny Faith said. “If this is something the school can use to save a little bit of money, then I think it’s worthwhile.”

The deal with Under Armour is that they will be giving back \$2,000 each during the three-year agreement to help the school transition to all the

uniforms.

“Basically they are helping us get moved over,” Hill said. “For instance, every other year Coach Faith buys a red jersey, then the next year he buys a white, and it switches each year. So this year whichever color he is supposed to buy he will get that color in the Under Armour brand.”

By next year the team will have both red and white jerseys in the Under Armour brand.

“Then the next year he will move one of those colors down to the JV,” Hill said. “The same way is for basketball. Whichever color coach Peacock needs, he will get that color in Under Armour.”

All the shoes and apparel come with a 35 percent discount as part of the agreement. The school does have to pay for the sports wear but the discount makes it more affordable.

“I think the change is going to be able to help us,” basketball head coach Ryder Peacock said. “It will be an easy transition since some of our stuff is already Under Armour, but our basketball gear is Nike.”

Not only is this for boys’ sports but also the girls’ sports such as volleyball, basketball, softball, and track.

“I’m fine with the transition,” volleyball coach Kim Hill said. “It’s something that the volleyball program will have to ease into since some of our stuff is fairly new, but next year we can add to our stuff. We can’t

switch completely all at once, but that’s fine since I’ve already ordered Under Armour socks, knee pads, and red uniforms.”

A big factor to the switch was the football team’s back-to-back state runs along with all the press and newspaper stories during those seasons.

“The reps name is Greg, and he was talking about coming and doing an Under Armour day,” Mr. Hill said. “If this happens, they will set up different displays of all the apparel for the coaches to see.”

The track team has been using other brands for their uniforms, but the varsity wind suits were Under Armour. Track head coach Rod Britting also said that the transition won’t be hard.

“I like the change,” sophomore Adam Faith said. “Considering that for football we have mainly used Riddell stuff. I don’t know if it will help my performance, but it will be cool.”

The volleyball team has been using a red jersey for about three years now, and sophomore Rylie Scott is looking forward to the change.

“I’m pretty excited to get the new gear for volleyball,” Scott said. “This past year we had old red Nike jerseys that had tons of holes in the sleeves. We had some grey ones that I loved because they were breathable, but the sweat stains were very noticeable.”

Like most companies, each brand has a different



Football Coach Denny Faith (above) looks at a sample football jersey shown by an Under Armour representative. Kaleigh Clevenger (left) and Alexis Munden sort through the new Under Armour softball jerseys. The softball team was the first group to use Under Armour uniforms. PHOTOS BY PARKER MOON

texture to the material used, which differentiates them from others.

“I like Under Armour because the jerseys are loose and breathable,” sophomore Lindsey Lucas said. “I think that the advantage to getting Under Armour would be that I won’t get as hot now like I used to in our old jerseys.”

Even though they are graduating, some seniors are still excited about the switch.

“I’m happy for the players who get the new gear,” senior Tyler Miller said. “It makes me feel like we accomplished something even though we lost at state two years in a row.”

Sophomore Harvey Hinkle is excited about the change.

“I’m excited because I like their brand,” Hinkle said. “I think that other brands, such as Riddell, rip easy. This past year my shirt ripped early on in the season. Hopefully Under Armour has a tougher material.”

Players strive for golden glove

Team holds strong position in playoff battle

BY RACHEL HILL
Copy Editor

After securing the top spot in the district, the Lions continue to battle their way to the top of the bracket. The game that determined the district championship featured the Lions and the Stamford Bulldogs. The Lions were down 0-2 in the fourth inning when the game was called because of bad weather. One day later the teams started back up again, but it was a whole new ball game. "We came out really strong the second day," senior Michael Cotter said. "The team competed, strung some solid hits together, and had fun." The game continued on into extra innings with the Lions pulling out an 8-2 win.

"Once their pitcher was taken out of the game because he had pitched eight innings, everything clicked for us after that," Cotter said. The two teams were tied for first, but the Lions claimed the championship trophy for the third sport this year. "We had great pitching between Brian and Drew," head baseball coach David Fairchild said. "It was a really big win for us because it gave the guys the outright championship, and the first seed going into the playoffs." Members of the team also recognized the accomplishment involved in beating a team like Stamford. "Winning is always good, but having such a huge comeback against an ace pitcher was even better," sophomore Brian Hamilton said. "Albany isn't really a baseball town, but to know that you have won district in each sport just proves that the athletic program consists of a group of guys who have talent, but also work hard."



Sophomore Brian Hamilton slides into home during the bi-district series against May on May 6-7. The team won the series 12-2 and 20-7. The Lions went on to win the area game on Thursday May 12 against McCamey, 16-2. Albany was scheduled to meet Miles in the regional quarterfinal last Friday and Saturday in Hermleigh. PHOTO BY RACHEL HILL

With post-season play underway, players are swinging for fences and aiming for a trip to the big game. "We are the team to beat in our region," Hamilton said. "If we keep our batting up, and play to our potential each time, we absolutely have a good shot at

making a trip to Austin." Fairchild agrees, saying that they entered the playoffs as first seed. "We were number one seed taking on number four seed the first round," Fairchild said. "Baseball is a funny game, though, because anything can happen on

any given day. However, I am really liking our chances and where we are sitting right now." The Lions won the bi-district series over May, 12-2 and 20-7. "We have to maintain our intensity," Hamilton said. "Late in the game when we know we have to do something in order to win, we pick it up. We need to start with high intensity in the first inning and not play an inning just to get by. We need to focus on playing each inning to win." Albany moved on to battle McCamey for the area contest in Snyder, once again coming out on top in the one game playoff 16-2. "We are really going to emphasize taking the playoffs one game at a time," Fairchild said. "Last year, we got beat out in the regional quarterfinals so we are shooting to get past that point, but we also can't overlook anybody." The Lions' post-season play continued with the quarterfinal series against the Miles Bulldogs in Hermleigh last Friday and Saturday. Results were not available at press time.

Lady Lions end season at bi-district

Team faces Windthorst in first round

BY BRIAN HAMILTON
Staff Writer

Lady Lion softball finished fourth in the District 7-2A race, which gave them a bi-district matchup against the Windthorst Trojanettes. The Lady Lions' season was brought to an end after a hard fought 15-7 loss to the Trojanettes on April 29. The softball team endured a challenging district schedule. "In my fifteen years of coaching softball, the district has never been this tough," softball coach Jimmy Fuentes said. "Our district is definitely one of the toughest districts in this region." Though finishing 19-12 overall and 9-5 in district play, Fuentes feels some games could have bounced the other way. "I wish we would've played more consistently," Fuentes said. "There were several games we should've won but let them slip by us." The team had good potential, but didn't always express

it on the field, according to the coach. "We needed to learn how to finish out wins in close ball games and to start faster," Fuentes said. While their record might not show their superiority, the Lady Lions' talent was not sub-par. "This team was very talented," Fuentes said. "They were every bit as talented as the teams that I've coached in the past." Despite adversities, players managed to help out the team when they needed it. "Several younger players got better at the plate," Fuentes said. "That's something we really needed and it helped us a lot." Lexi Munden, a junior, shares similar feelings about the team. "We improved a lot from last year," Munden said. "The team hit a whole lot better than we did last year." Munden also agrees that the younger players stepped up. "They filled in the spots in the batting order," she said. "We needed to fill spots in the field and they did a great job with that also." This team grew closer to-



Sophomore Reyna Garcia swings at a pitch delivered by the Stamford Lady Bulldogs pitcher. The Lady Lions lost to the Windthorst Trojanettes in the bi-district round in Graham. PHOTO BY KYLEA GARDNER

gether due to experience. "Our bond grew tighter this year," Munden said. "We've played together so long that we know how we work in a game and can read each other." While the team's ability was there, there were times that things just didn't go their way. "We weren't always consis-

tent and that hurt us," Munden said. "We'd have great games then have games with several mistakes." Inconsistency was a recognizable issue among the whole team. "We'd have a good inning, then come out and make mistakes that allowed teams to

come back," senior Lori Davis said. "We just weren't able to put it all together." To take a step up from last year, extra work was a necessity. "We didn't hit well last year," Davis said. "We worked on hitting a lot and it helped our bats come alive at times this season." During the sparks of peak performance, the younger players, proved their worth. "The younger players had big positions to fill and they did tremendously," Davis said. "Lindsey Lucas and Reyna Garcia were a big part of the team this year, and the other sophomores hit well, too." Emotions ran high for the seniors on the squad. "We didn't play as well as I wanted us to for our last game," senior Tobin Nall said. "It's hard to swallow." Nall offered some advice to underclassmen. "Your time is limited," Nall said. "Make the most of it." In regards to the graduating seniors, Fuentes said he will miss this group. "I always miss every group of seniors," Fuentes said. "Especially when they've been in the program for all four years."

Track team competes at state meet

Boys, girls track teams advance to state

BY RYLIE SCOTT
News Editor

After a track season full of post-district qualifiers, several Lion and Lady Lion track and field athletes advanced to the state track meet held at the Mike A. Myers Stadium at the University of Texas. The state track meet was held May 13-14 in Austin, resulting in medals in the mile relay, high jump, and pole vault for the boys. Head boys' track coach Rod Britting had high expectations for all of his athletes' performances at the state meet. "We have had kids make it to state before, so we expect the absolute best out of them," Britting said before the meet. "The goal is to get a medal. If you get to state but don't win a medal, then it's very disappointing." The boys' state qualifying track team consisted of seniors Levi Britting, Caleb Masters, Michael Cotter, and juniors Roman Fuentes, Jordan Pleasant, Ethen Bernstein, and Hunter Owen. "No matter what sport you're in, getting to state is a stellar achievement," Britting said. "We have to consider that the top nine in the state will compete against each other in all events."

The team had competitors in the mile relay, sprint relay, pole vault, high jump, and the 400 meter dash. "The 2A division is extremely talented in every event this year," Britting said. "I think Michael was the favorite to win the high jump. We looked good in the other events we advanced in as well." Due to health issues, practices before the state meet were modified a little according to Britting. "There's not going to be much more shape put on in two weeks," Britting said. "We may get a little faster but I wanted to try to maintain the boys' health. We wanted the boys to be on fresh legs when they run at Austin." First-time state qualifier junior Roman Fuentes, who was battling a hip injury was reassured after finding out he had advanced to state. "It was just so relieving to know that all my hard work and dedication paid off," Fuentes said. "I knew what my personal goal was, and I did everything I needed to obtain it." Fuentes competed in the mile relay, sprint relay, and 400 meter dash. "I expect to show up and be the best," Fuentes said, prior to the meet. Junior Ethen Bernstein, who was also a first-time state qualifier, was excited as well after learning that he was advancing in pole vault as the wild card. "I thought about last year when



Junior Jordan Pleasant (right) hands the baton off to junior Roman Fuentes (left) at the Regional Qualifiers Meet. The team will compete in the sprint relay and mile relay at the State Meet on May 14 in Austin. PHOTO BY RYLIE SCOTT

I placed third at regionals and didn't make it to state," Bernstein said. "I told Coach that I was going to make it this year and that's what I did." Bernstein stated there was still plenty left for him to work on, since the stakes were so much higher than other meets. "I jump better at lower heights, but I know I can jump at least 15 feet," Bernstein said. "There were plenty of good competitors there. I was able to get on a bigger pole, and I was excited to see how I jump when it all counts." Owen, Masters, Cotter, and Fuentes took bronze in the mile relay, Bernstein took silver in pole vault, and Cotter took silver in high jump at the state meet.

The Lady Lions took sophomores Baley Green, Krysten Morris, junior Rachel Hill, and senior Tobin Nall to the state meet. The girls advanced in the mile relay, 100-meter hurdles and 300-meter hurdles. "I hoped the mile relay would be able to knock off another four or five seconds off their time," head girls track coach Ginger Norton said before the meet. "Rachel had a good chance to get in the top three in the 300-meter hurdles as well. Whenever there is more competition, it pushes her more to run her fastest." The state track meet was full of surprises, according to Norton. "When you get there, you never know what may happen," Norton

said. "I've seen teams come in with the top times in the state and place fifth or sixth and vice versa." The girls' mile relay team advanced to state after being selected as the wild card. Senior Tobin Nall was ecstatic when she found out the exciting news. "We waited all day and didn't find out that we made it until almost midnight," Nall said. "When I first heard the news I ran and hugged my mom and dad first. We laughed and cried all at the same time. It was very emotional." Nall's teammates and coach joined in on the well-deserved celebration. "I got a text from Rachel saying she was on her way to my house, so as soon as she and her mom arrived, we went crazy jumping around, screaming, laughing, and crying happy tears," Nall said. "The three of us then went to surprise Krysten and Baley at their houses and did the same thing over again." Nall explained it felt like a dream. "I kept having to tell myself 'this is real,'" Nall said. "The best feeling was knowing that my career as a Lady Lion wasn't quite finished." Norton felt that the girls deserved the wild card spot. "They are all so humble and have worked so hard," Norton said. "The girls have had to juggle their other spring sports and academics, so to have gotten another shot must feel so accomplishing."

Students prepare for college apps

Juniors, sophomores should apply early in fall

BY RYLIE SCOTT
News Editor

The start of a new school year is rapidly approaching for the incoming juniors and seniors. The year is full of “last first days” and potential for senioritis awaits.

Along with junior and senior year come the responsibilities of the long, tedious process of applying for college.

Counselor DeeDee Waggoner ensures students that it’s never too early to start preparing for college and the college application process.


“Incoming juniors really need to focus on getting their GPA as high as possible by the end of the next year,” Waggoner said. “Participating in campus and community organizations will help them get more involved. Quality is better than quantity.”

Incoming sophomores can also start preparing for their academic future.

“Sophomores should focus on grades and build a well-rounded resume,” Waggoner said. “Get involved, volunteer, and practice for entrance exams such as the ACT and the SAT every chance you get.”


Certain requirements for the application process should be completed by the end of the junior year.

“Juniors will complete



INCOMING JUNIORS CHECKLIST

- ☐ **MEET WITH YOUR COUNSELOR.** Make sure to discuss colleges, find resources, and ask about upcoming college events and opportunities such as college nights.
- ☐ **EARN COLLEGE CREDIT.** Start earning college credit by taking Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Credit courses.
- ☐ **VISIT COLLEGE CAMPUSES.** Find out when admissions tours are offered and visit campuses of those colleges that interest you. Visiting schools will help you determine whether the size, location, and personality are right for you.
- ☐ **STAY INVOLVED.** Continue extracurricular activities and take on leadership roles to earn possible community service hours.
- ☐ **TAKE SAT/ACT EXAMS.** Look for SAT/ACT prep materials to help familiarize yourself with the exams and better your scores.
- ☐ **CREATE A PROFESSIONAL EMAIL.** Set up a professional email address that can be used for all your online college-related accounts.



INCOMING SENIORS CHECKLIST

- ☐ **REVIEW YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE.** Meet with your counselor to ensure you meet all of the necessary college requirements.
- ☐ **FOCUS YOUR COLLEGE SEARCH.** Narrow your list of colleges to between five and ten based on your academic credentials.
- ☐ **CREATE A MASTER CALENDAR.** Make a master calendar of important dates, including test dates and registration, college application, and financial aid deadlines.
- ☐ **COMPOSE YOUR COLLEGE FILE.** Keep copies of test scores, applications for admission and financial aid, college essays, and your resume.
- ☐ **VISIT COLLEGE CAMPUSES.** Find out when admissions tours are offered and visit campuses of those colleges that interest you. Try to sit in on a class and talk to current students. Visiting schools will help you determine whether the size, location, and personality are right for you.
- ☐ **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION.** Think of 3 to 5 people to ask for letters of recommendation for your college application.

one ACT to see which one I score better on,” Munden said. “I’m going to take whichever one I make the highest on again.”

Clevenger and Munden have their eyes set on Texas Tech.

“I will apply in August for Texas Tech hopefully,” Clevenger said. “Tech is the only school I’m really interested in and will probably be the only one I apply to.”

Junior Rachel Hill continues to keep her college options open.

“I have visited Texas A&M, and I really like it,” Hill said. “It’s a huge campus and I like feeling small. It makes me put the world into perspective and realize that I’m a part of something much bigger. I plan on visiting some smaller colleges as well just to compare.”

Campus organizations, such as sororities and fraternities, hold Rush Weeks to recruit new members. However, to be accepted into one, you have to apply first.

“I’m having to go to a few places in Abilene since I want to participate in Rush,” Clevenger said. “They have these pamphlets and speakers that explain all the stuff you’re getting into, because sometimes a sorority just isn’t for you.”

Rush Week normally takes place at the beginning of the school year.

“If you decide sorority life is for you, then you visit the different sororities to figure out which one you like and best suits you,” Clevenger said. “If you get a bid from more than one, then you get to choose which one you want.”

Graduating seniors give parting advice

Students discuss obstacles in high school

BY PARKER MOON
Staff Writer

Seniors graduating means a new generation of students taking a step up the educational ladder.

Progressing forward to the next grade level typically brings new responsibilities and obstacles for students.

Seniors have navigated the various paths to commencement for four years and are best qualified to share tips, tricks and maybe a little wisdom to make it to the ultimate goal of graduation.

Whether that is studying hard, enjoying the experience while it lasts, or preparing for college, this year’s seniors have parting advice for underclassmen.

Opinions differed from seniors on the best ways of surviving high school.

“I would say take high school day by day,” senior Tobin Nall said, “and don’t take anything for granted



Seniors Savannah Perez, Sarah Rogers, and Lori Davis write down advice for underclassmen. The three will attend college this fall. They plan to attend Angelo State, Tarrant State, and Texas Christian universities.

PHOTO BY PARKER MOON

because it goes by fast. Stay on top of things because if you procrastinate, things will overwhelm you after a while.”

Senior Newt Koemel said that procrastinating is a pitfall that should be avoided. Senior Sarah Rogers said she learned the hard way.

“Don’t procrastinate,” Rogers said. “Never wait ‘til the last minute to do a five-page essay that is due at midnight.”

Grades are important for some students in order to get into college, but there are debates over whether to have fun in high school or worry more about grades.

“Students should care

about their grades during their senior year especially,” Koemel said. “Yes, senior year is meant for fun towards the end, but your grades will help you get into college. Then it won’t be as stressful.”

Grades for senior Lori Davis were always a big part of her high school career.

“I think students should work hard to make the best grades,” Davis said. “Good grades really make applying for colleges and scholarships much easier. It is just one less thing to worry about.”

Senior Savannah Perez said she tried to find a balance.

“You can keep a balance between having fun and

your grades, but grades are going to help you more,” senior Savannah Perez said. “Grades are big when it comes to GPA’s and college applications. Most students want to have fun, but it will catch up with you later.”

Davis also explained how slacking off during the earlier years can affect class rank.

“Take grades seriously throughout high school,” Davis said. “I know some people who slacked off as a freshman, and now as seniors they are behind in the class rank. It is hard to get back up in the rank.”

Senior Michael Cotter expressed some regrets

from high school that other students can learn from.

“Slacking off my freshman and sophomore years really hurt me,” Cotter said. “Do your own work, or you won’t learn anything.”

Slacking off early in high school is usually one regret, but for Sarah Rogers it was more of a friendship type of deal.

“Hang out with your friends as much as you can,” Rogers said. “Before you know it, those last couple of weeks come up on you and you realize you don’t have as much time as you wish you could have.”

Scholarships, getting applications in, and dual-credit classes also had an impact on Perez.

“Scholarships are a big deal your senior year,” Perez said. “They are hard to keep up with along with all the college classes I’m taking. You’ve got to stay on top of things.”

Applications also occur at the end of junior year and can last throughout the senior year.

“Get applications done early,” Koemel said. “When your applications aren’t done early, it causes extra stress.”

Along with scholarships and applications, seniors typically take as many dual-credit classes as the school offers.

“College dual-credit classes were hard for me” Koemel said. “I suggest students take those classes because they teach you how to study, and you walk out having an idea of what a college class will be like.”

By taking dual-credit classes, students are now learning at a college level and preparing themselves to be on their own. Therefore, some of those classes can be more difficult compared to high school, some seniors said.

“Mr. Norton’s classes are pretty hard,” Nall said. “But that’s because they are college classes, and any college class in high school will be hard.”

Students often ask which classes they should work hard in, and Cotter said the simple answer is “all of them.”

“Students should work hard in all of the classes they take,” Perez said. “If you slack off early on in the year or early in high school, then it will show up in the long run.”

“ILPC”

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made me a better writer, but not necessarily a better journalist,” senior Curry Wilson said. “The sessions give good tips for any form of writing.”

ILPC can also help in other areas of journalism.

“I learned some new ideas to help better manage my staff,” editor Lori Davis said. “I think that now I can be a better editor and make our newspaper class more fun.”

However, ILPC doesn’t only help student writers.

“I went to some sessions that covered the design aspect of newspaper,” newspaper adviser Donnie Lucas said. “I think that we will try to make some design changes for our paper

and freshen up our look next year. I’ve learned that simple designs are better and that cluttered designs only confuse our readers.”

ILPC gives out Tops in Texas awards, which are given to students who have the best individual photo, story, design, etc. in each category. Students first compete within their school’s classification (1A-6A), then all the first place entries are judged again to determine the top overall entry in the state.

This year the *Lions Roar* won four of these awards.

Curry Wilson won best photo story and best feature photo, Lori Davis won best editorial designs, and the staff won best captions.

“I was nervous at the Tops in Texas awards ceremony because I knew that some

of my photos were good, but I didn’t know if I could beat the schools where most of their staff has more time for newspaper than I do,” Wilson said. “I was very surprised when I won best feature photo though, just because I was going against much bigger schools.”

The wins were also impressive because of the style that *The Lions Roar* uses.

“I was very surprised at our Tops in Texas wins because our paper has a very traditional newspaper layout, while many of the winners have a very magazine-like style,” Davis said. “It was nice to see our classic look win.”

The convention also hands out a number of bronze, silver, and gold star awards, which are given to the top 25 publications in the

state. *The Lions Roar* received a Silver Star this year, making it one of the top 12 papers in all divisions.

“It’s a big honor to win a Star Award at a school of our size,” Davis said. “I was a little disappointed to win a Silver Star because winning a Gold Star is always our goal and we normally accomplish that goal. However, looking at the big picture, winning a Silver Star is a huge accomplishment.”

The students aren’t the only ones who are proud of their awards.

“It was a very successful convention,” Lucas said. “We had four Tops in Texas awards, which was very good for our paper. Winning those is also very impressive since we are the smallest division eligible to win an award.”

Receiving a Silver Star award did not disappoint Lucas.

“I know that our staff was disappointed that we got a Silver Star instead of a gold, but they should be proud because a Silver Star is a huge honor,” Lucas said. Only the top five papers in Texas get a Gold Star, and with a Silver Star you are in the top 12 to 15 papers in Texas, which is an accomplishment since most papers that win Star Awards are 5A or 6A.”

Students that are in the journalism class and plan to take newspaper the following year also get to make the trip to gain experience before joining the newspaper staff.

“I learned some new things at ILPC this year,” sophomore Ryan Hill said. “I can’t wait to take the skills

that I learned at ILPC and apply them to newspaper next year.”

“UIL”

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for their event

“I decided to compete in UIL because I wanted to be able to test my knowledge against other students from across the state,” Owen said. “It is interesting to see how I rank against other students.”

Others compete simply for the thrill of competing against your peers from across the state.

“I enjoy competing against other students academically,” Britting said. “I do well in school, so I thought I would have a good opportunity to go compete and win some recognition.”