

THE VISTA



NOTRE DAME ACADEMY-3535 W. SYLVANIA AVE. TOLEDO, OHIO 43623 VOL. 57 ISSUE 3 DEC. 15, 2008

Notre Dame to Offer IB Diploma in 2013

ALYSSA BAZ

In May of 2008, the Notre Dame Academy Administration and Board of Trustees took the first steps towards becoming an International Baccalaureate (IB) recognized school, in hopes of making the Diploma Programme available to the class of 2013.

The IB Diploma Programme originated in Switzerland in the late 1960s for extremely gifted students ages 16 through 19. As of 2007, the program was taught in more than 2,000 schools in 125 countries.

The application process is extensive, requiring several written applications as well as a school visit from IB representatives and teacher and administration training. NDA has already submitted the Interested Schools application and will submit a more detailed application in October of 2009.

Over the past summer, NDA President Sr. Mary Ann Culpert and Principal Mrs. Kim Grilliot attended the International Baccalaureate North America Conference in San Francisco, California.

"We decided to apply to become an IB recognized school because the IB Programme puts the same emphasis on global learning and international thinking as the Sisters of Notre Dame, our sponsors, do," Sr. Mary Ann said. "We were also interested in the academic rigor of the program. This will present another opportunity to improve Notre Dame's already strong academic reputation."

At this point, administrators are speaking with teachers to see who would be interested in receiving IB training. The training is ongoing, with conferences and workshops available throughout the year.

"Teachers with IB training will not teach solely IB courses; therefore, all students will benefit from teachers' IB training, whether they are in the program or not," Sr. Mary Ann said.

The IB Diploma Programme is structured similarly to typical curriculum, but with several distinct differences.

There are six subject groups; three are studied at a higher level than the others. The subjects are English, foreign languages, experimental sciences, arts, mathematics and computer sciences, and individuals and societies (social studies).

What makes the IB Programme stand out from others like the AP program are the three core requirements: Theory of Knowledge, an extended essay; creativity; and action and service. Theory of Knowledge is similar to a philosophy class; the extended essay is a 4,000 word essay on the topic of the student's choice. Creativity and action and service ensure that students participate in activities outside of the academic setting.

NDA will be the only all-girls Catholic school in Ohio to offer the IB Diploma Programme to students beginning in the 2011-2012 school year. Central Catholic High School will be the only other school in the Toledo area offering the program, beginning in the 2010-2011 school year.

"I think it would look good on a college application. I've never heard of the program until now, but it sounds like a good idea," sophomore Nina Vargas said.

Although the Diploma Programme will only be available to the incoming freshman class starting their junior year, current freshmen will also have the opportunity to take several courses



NDJA eighth grader Nataasha Riveron is one of several eighth graders interested in discovering what the IB Programme at NDA has to offer her. Photo by Alyssa Baz

to receive IB credit during their senior year.

Parents of incoming freshmen have already been introduced to the IB Programme, and along with the assistance of teachers and guidance counselors, girls and their parents will decide if they wish to participate in the IB Diploma Programme.

If students are interested, they will begin taking honors classes as freshmen. When the time comes to officially enter the program, students have the option to participate in IB courses or continue with standard NDA curriculum.

"My parents and I have been looking into [the IB Programme] and we're definitely interested," NDJA eighth grader Nataasha Riveron said.

Students in the IB Programme will remain in the building, whereas PSEO students must leave to attend higher level courses. IB students will still take required NDA courses in subjects like theology and physical education.

"Our goal in beginning the IB process was to attract more students to NDA's academic programs and to present the gifted students of Notre Dame with more rigorous academic opportunities," Sr. Mary Ann said.

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COLLEEN SMYTHE

Open House Vote

At Open House, visitors were asked to give their opinion on this question: "Should the U.S. government provide another stimulus package for citizens?" The results show that 139 people agreed that the government should provide another package while 55 said it should not.

Exam Schedule

Tuesday, Dec. 16

Period 1 Exam: 8:00 - 9:30

Break: 9:30 - 9:45

Period 2 Exam: 9:45 - 11:15

Lunch: 11:15 - 12:00

Period 4 Exam: 12:00 - 1:30

Wednesday, Dec. 17

Period 5 Exam: 8:00 - 9:30

Break: 9:30 - 9:45

Period 6 Exam: 9:45 - 11:15

Lunch: 11:15 - 12:00

Period 8 Exam: 12:00 - 1:30

Thursday, Dec. 18

Period 3 Exam: 9:00 - 10:30

Break: 10:30 - 10:45

Period 7 Exam: 10:45 - 12:15

Speech Meet

The Notre Dame Academy Ducks on Ice speech team tournament will take place at NDA on Jan. 24. Teams from high schools in the Toledo area will compete. Registration starts at 7:45 a.m. Almost every space in the school will be used for competition, including classrooms and storage rooms. NDA students can earn service hours by volunteering to sell food and guide visitors around the school.

English Classes Go Global

MAGGIE DZIUBEK



Freshman English students Bernadette McCarthy and Jessika Matthews spend their period three class chatting with Israeli students in preparation for the International Booksharing Project. Photo by Maggie Dziubek

Students often study world literature in English; however, some Notre Dame Academy students will be studying literature with students from another part of the world as part of a special booksharing project.

This January, 54 freshmen will participate in cultural exchange via an online book discussion with Israeli students participating in the International Booksharing Project, sponsored by the Ghetto Fighter's Museum.

The project is an effort "to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and anti-Semitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry," United States project coordinator Ms. Lana Berkhart said.

Mrs. Phyllis Bixler's two English I classes will read the novel *Island on Bird Street* by Uri Orlev. They will then share their experience with the ORT Minkoff School in Jerusalem using student forums on the project website.

Island on Bird Street is the story of a young boy who survives the Holocaust as an orphan in a European ghetto.

The Holocaust is central to Mrs. Bixler's third quarter curriculum. At a conference this summer, she met a fellow teacher who had participated in the project. This inspired Mrs. Bixler to introduce the project at NDA.

"Our application went right through, and Hindea Markowitz of the United Jewish Council of Greater Toledo agreed to fund the project in full," Mrs. Bixler said.

For the girls and boys of the ORT Minkoff School in Jerusalem, the project is also an effort to improve their English language skills.

Joanna Baker is one of the freshmen girls in Mrs. Bixler's class that will be participating in the project.

"We had to practice answering the discussion questions, and we had to make sure we wrote in proper English so they would be sure to understand us," Joanna said.

The project is a unique learning experience because of Israel's special connection with the Holocaust-era Jewish community.

"It's not just about the book. Hopefully it will emphasize what [the Holocaust] was like and will help NDA students see the bigger picture," Mrs. Bixler said.

The project begins in December with a chat between the two classrooms.

"It is interesting that students often discover that they have a lot in common with their partners," Ms. Berkhart said.

"They can ask what music and movies they like and if there is a McDonalds in Jerusalem, for example," Mrs. Bixler said.

"I'm excited for the project because it is a great way to academically interact with kids from other countries," Joanna said.

The students will work on the project in the third quarter. It will culminate in a multimedia presentation in April or May for the United Jewish Council's Holocaust Memorial.

Cool Theme Enhances Christmas Dance

ELISA DURAN

"Stop, collaborate and listen." Notre Dame put a new spin on the lyrics to "Ice Ice Baby" by making it the 2008 Christmas Dance theme.

On Saturday Dec. 6, the Dining Hall was transformed into a dance floor. The decorations were light and airy with silver and blue colors, an igloo-themed entrance and presents along the walls.

Girls walking into Alumnae Hall to check their coats were presently surprised to find that it was turned into a winter wonderland, complete with its very own penguin.

"I was so happy when I heard that the theme was 'Ice Ice Baby'. It's one of my favorite songs," senior Mary Delaney said.

Christmas Dance is exciting to seniors and juniors for many different reasons. Juniors enjoy attending the dance because it is their first dance as upperclasswomen.

"I was excited to take my boyfriend because I asked him to go in a cute way and it was the first time I was allowed to go," junior Haley Phillips said.

For seniors, this is one of the last

dances they can attend with their friends at Notre Dame before they graduate.

"I couldn't wait to go to Christmas Dance. I just wanted to do the fax machine all night," senior Tina Song said.

This year's music was provided by DJ Scholar, also known as Rob Gabriel, who graduated from St. Francis in 2005.

"I heard him DJ at Ottawa Hills' Homecoming and thought he did great so I recommended him to Ms. Denos," senior Anya Ursu said.

The songs that DJ Scholar played were all pre-picked by Notre Dame girls and approved by a teacher.

The weather, however, was less than agreeable with snow covered roads.

This year's Christmas Dance Queen was senior Gabby Mills, escorted by Qu'Ran Fahringer.

"I was really shocked and happy that I won queen," Gabby said.

The senior class voted Olivia Barone, Soleita Kabwasa, Maureen McQuillan and Taylour Rogers to the Christmas Dance Court.

Junior girls voted Kristen Long,



Senior Brittanie Kuhr greets chaperone English teacher Mrs. Laura Gallaher. Submitted by Brittanie Kuhr

Haley Phillips, Chahdael Smith, Anna Speck and Jessie Yeager as their representatives on the court.

As seniors danced to the beats of their last Christmas Dance and juniors enjoyed their first, some teachers rocked to the old-school music of ABBA.

"It was a really fun experience and I had a great night. I was really proud of the seniors for putting together this dance," Gabby said.

Mr. NDA Core Team Prepares Production

EMILY MILLS

After the Christmas tree has been taken down and the last gingerbread cookie has been eaten, NDA girls still have something to look forward to- Mr. NDA is just a few weeks away.

This year, core team members will run the show scheduled for Monday, Jan. 26. Previously, diplomats had been in charge of the production.

Celeste Kalouria, Molly Keller, Kaetlyn Veluscek, Jessie Yeager, Stephanie Perrine and Nada Abouarrage are the Mr. NDA core team members.

The Mr. NDA core team gave applications to boys at St. Francis de Sales and St. John's Jesuit.

The participating SJJ boys are Corbin Howard, T.J. Hunter, Joshua Johnson, Troy Johnson, Landon Meadows, Matt Sellick, John Thrasher and Tyler Towns.

The participating SFS boys are Matt Balzer, Tyler Clark, Jonathon Findlay and Tim Towse.

After the core team has reviewed all of the applications, they decide which boys they would like to interview.

The purpose of an interview is to have a conversation with the boys in order

to make sure they are a good representative of their school.

"Interviewing the guys was fun because I got to meet a lot of different people and I got to see how they would react in front of a bunch of girls," junior Jessie Yeager said.

Mrs. Meredith Wagoner, Special Events Coordinator, works with Mrs. Virginia Keller to supervise the core team. They make sure the girls get everything completed. They confirm that the boys and their escorts have good grades and are involved with their school.

After the core team finalizes what boys will participate in the contest, the girls still have more work to do.

The core team members must decide who is going to judge the contestants.

This year, a contest will be held in order to pick the student judge from NDA.

In the Dining Hall, there will be pictures of the boys hanging up. Above those pictures, photos of the escorts will be hanging. In order to become the student judge, girls must match the boy to the correct escort. Whoever gets

the most right will become the student judge.

The panel of judges will also consist of two teachers from NDA, one boy from St. Francis, one boy from St. John's and one student judge from NDA.

There are three events during the show. These events include casualwear, sportswear and formalwear. Within these events the judges pay attention to each boy's personality and stage presence.

"My favorite event to watch is sportswear because the sports that are chosen are silly and really creative," junior Kaetlyn Veluscek said.

To get the final scores, the judges decide what number rating each boy will receive.

The boys are scored on a scale of one to ten. All the numbers are added to get a total. Whoever has the highest total wins.

"I like being a part of the Mr. NDA core team because you get to meet a lot of new people and everyone gets into it so it's fun," senior Molly Keller said.

Service for Others Adds Christmas Brings Peace to Soldiers in Wartime

KRISTY KISSOFF

For some people, Christmas is a time of joy and togetherness, but for others, it is like every other day: dangerous and tiring. While many Americans will be surrounded by their families on Dec. 25, soldiers will be in the line of fire, protecting their country for those who celebrate at home.

The holiday season still exists in Iraq for soldiers. Major Aaron Koenigseker, 1988 alum of SJJ and 20-year member of the U.S. Army, will be spending this Christmas in Iraq.

“Christmas spirit is hard to define, but I would say that it is here, just different. We know it’s the holidays and soon there will be Christmas cards, décor and gifts on our desks and nightstands and it will almost be festive,” Major Koenigseker said.

Missing holidays with the family is hard for any soldier.

“I have missed many occasions throughout my years and have been separated from my family so often. I won’t say that it doesn’t bother me at all (I haven’t become that callous yet) but I’ll soldier on as always,” Major Koenigseker said.

His family will be celebrating Christmas when he returns home in February.

“Christmas is just a day on the calendar; seeing my fiancé and family again is like Christmas every day,” Major Koenigseker said.

Many soldiers in the military believe they are giving up their time to give a much needed present to people who deserve it.

“I feel that as a military, we are doing a lot of good for the Iraqi people and are setting them up for a successful future if they choose to follow it through. That is the best Christmas gift I can think to give: freedom and security,” Major Koenigseker said.

For other soldiers, Christmas is not so evident. Major Chris Dziubek, father of senior Maggie Dziubek, served a past Christmas in the Middle East as part of his tour for the U.S. Army Reserves.

“I spent Christmas 2004 sleeping in the back of a HUMVEE while training in the Kuwait desert. We had no spe-



Colonel Hymel and his daughter, sophomore Lydia Hymel, along with senior Maggie Dziubek and her father, Major Dziubek, spoke to students at a Current Events Club meeting on Veterans’ Day in Alumni Hall. Photo by Kristy Kissoff

cial celebration that year,” Major Dziubek said.

Though it can be lonely during the holidays, soldiers are still able to stay connected with their families.

“It was remarkably easy for me to stay in touch. I had my own laptop with an Internet connection for the bulk of my 14 months there and I had email and [Internet] conversations,” Major Dziubek said.

Although the military has a deficit of chaplains in Iraq, many soldiers want to attend religious services in the chapel for holidays or whenever possible, including Captain Jessica Utter, NDA ’99 alum, who has served in Iraq for one tour with the U.S. Marines.

“There were two Catholic priests serving as Marine Corps Chaplains at Al Asad [base], so I was able to attend Catholic Mass on [holidays],” Captain Utter said.

Mail service is another touch of home on military bases. Soldiers can receive mail from their family or anyone who wants to support the troops.

“Often we’ll get packages addressed to ‘Any Marine’ and we make sure it gets to a Marine who doesn’t get much or any mail,” Captain Utter said.

Captain Utter is serving at a base in Cherry Point, North Carolina and plans to visit family in Ohio for Christmas.

She will return to Iraq in the spring for a six month tour.

Soldiers appreciate support from home. Staff Sergeant Nick Chadwick, a student at UT who served in Iraq from Feb. 2006 to Mar. 2007 in the U.S. Army Reserves, received encouraging sentiment, even with growing opposition to the war.

“The message from back home was very positive towards the troops. Supporting the troops doesn’t always mean supporting our mission or the premise of the war. While most people sent well wishes and care packages, some did not respect our purpose in Iraq,” Staff Sergeant Chadwick said.

Since he has returned home, Staff Sergeant Chadwick has a new perspective on the war.

“Sometimes people back home get caught up in the domestic issues and forget that we are still fighting an insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Staff Sergeant Chadwick said.

For Christians, Christmas is seen as the time of peace on earth; however, soldiers are called to serve at all times of the year.

“I don’t feel any different being here over Christmas than any other day. This is the job I chose to do, and I perform it voluntarily with pride,” Major Koenigseker said.

Meaning to the Holiday



Notes from Home

KRISTY KISSOFF

For anyone wishing to express gratitude towards soldiers serving in Iraq, there are several organizations that will provide the name of a soldier who would enjoy receiving notes from home. One site in particular is Operation Military Support. To receive a soldier's name:

- *With a parent's permission, go to operationmilitarysupport.com
- *Click on "request a name"
- *Fill in your name, mailing address and email address
- *Receive an email with a soldier's name and address
- *Write a letter thanking him or her for their service and include your email address if you would like a response

Eagles Play Santa, Bring Gifts

COLLEEN SMYTHE

While the rest of NDA's students sleep in on their first day of Christmas Break, about 45 girls will board a bus at 7:30 a.m. and ride for over eight hours to Harlan, Kentucky for the Christmas Appalachia mission trip.

NDA students run a toy store, serve lunch to about 300 people and host a party where kids meet Santa Claus. Each guest receives two gifts.

"All they get for Christmas is what we give them," Pastor Services Assistant Mrs. Aimee Parks said.

The trip is meant to brighten the holidays for the less fortunate and expose NDA girls to the needs of these people.

For many girls, the trip is a moving experience that teaches them to value what they have.

Senior Maureen McQuillan attended the mission trip last year. "The parents [at the store] were so happy when they realized they could buy more than one gift," she said.

At last year's toy store, sophomore Kassie Mallory saw a girl excitedly grab the first book she could find, a

math textbook, and beg her mother to let her use a toy ticket on it.

Maureen believes that interacting with the people is the best part because they are interesting individuals.

Many students also get an opportunity to bond with classmates and get to know girls in different grade levels.

A classmate encouraged junior Rebeca Aguilar to volunteer this year.

"I really want to see the kids' faces when they get their gifts," Rebeca said.

Freshman Morgan Reape is a first-time applicant as well.

"It would be inspiring to see people happy about what I did," Morgan said.

On the other hand, some students hesitate to spend time on the trip during their time off from school.

"The rewards are worth more than the time you could spend at home sleeping," Pastoral Services Coordinator Mrs. Cheryl Pryor said.

Most volunteers see the Harlan Christmas experience as a positive one.

"I have no expectations," senior Katie Link said. "I know whatever happens will be incredible."

Life in Plaid



Sophomore Danielle Limon knits the beginning stitches of a scarf during Knitting Club. Members of the club knitted scarves to be given as gifts to the residents of Harlan, Kentucky during the Christmas Appalachia trip this month. Knitting Club meets on Fridays in room 301 during the entire lunch period. *Photo by Dana Chavez*

Roving Reporter

EMILY MILLS

How are you serving others during the Christmas season?

"I'm going to Appalachia and donating a lot to charities through church," Sam Riccio, sophomore.

"We collected things for the Shoe Box Charity, and I offered to go to Appalachia if they need more adults. Also I go to the Infirmary to visit the sick Sisters," Sr. Gail Wrasman, faculty.

"Making cookies for the soup kitchen," Annie Danko, senior.

"Preparing and serving meals to homeless shelters," Kelsey McKenty, junior.

"I help with the Meals On Wheels for people who cannot get out of their house with my mom and I rake leaves for the handicapped," Lexi Aughenbaugh, freshman.

"I'm going to India, so I fill my suitcases with food and school supplies that I give to those who are less fortunate," Ms. Paly Modi, faculty.

Medical Marijuana Lights Up Argument

Medical Marijuana Gives Patient Relief

LAURA GERHARDINGER

Medical marijuana should be legal because it relieves many symptoms of serious diseases and carries no more risk than other drugs used to ease pain.

Cannabis, the scientific term for marijuana, can be used to suppress nausea, increase appetite, reduce inner eye pressure and muscle spasms and relieve persistent pain. Marijuana is also used to alleviate symptoms of diseases such as AIDS, Glaucoma, cancer, Multiple Sclerosis and Epilepsy.

In addition to these illnesses, marijuana is also effective in treating arthritis, migraines, menstrual cramps and psychological disorders.

As to the potential risks of marijuana, no deaths from the drug have ever been reported in the United States. A person weighing 154 pounds can tolerate 70 grams of marijuana, which is 5,000 times the amount needed to get high.

Compared to the risks of tobacco, alcohol and many FDA-approved prescription and nonprescription drugs, marijuana is no more dangerous than any legal drug.

It has never been proven that marijuana leads to more dangerous drugs. Reports show that most drug users begin with tobacco and alcohol rather than marijuana.

Patients who need marijuana have two choices when the substance is illegal: continue to endure harsh symptoms or illegally acquire the drug. The latter option not only breaks the law but can also result in an unsafe, impure or insufficient amount of marijuana.

In states that permit medical marijuana, approved patients are given a certain amount of marijuana and are allowed to grow a designated number of plants in a secure, locked place.

If patients can be prescribed drugs that could be addictive or potentially deadly, they should be able to choose a drug that is safer.



Medical Marijuana Risks Patient Health

DANA CHAVEZ

Marijuana should not be legalized for medical use because the patient risks outweigh the benefits; the drug is difficult to deliver safely and once it is used, it consistently requires a higher dosage to create the desired effect.

Using marijuana can alleviate pain caused by some diseases but by smoking it, a patient may create more problems than when using a different medication.

There are many harmful carcinogens and chemicals that can be inhaled by smoking any substance. In fact, no FDA-approved drugs are smoked because of the risk smoking creates. Some harmful side effects of smoking marijuana are dysphoria, tachycardia and motor and coordination impairment.

Since marijuana is smoked, it is difficult to administer safe and regulated dosages. The marijuana is also self-prescribed and self-administered by the patient so it is more likely that he or she may receive an ineffective or unsafe dosage.

Medical marijuana is also not governed by daily dose criteria, meaning that the patient would take the drug as needed. This would also increase the likelihood of the patient receiving an unhealthy dose of marijuana that could do more harm than help.

Any drug that causes euphoria and diminishes anxiety has some risk of dependency. Even though marijuana is known to be a less addictive drug than those like cocaine and alcohol, repeated use can lead to a psychological craving that could become overwhelming for some users.

Lastly, marijuana is a drug that produces tolerance. The more it is used, the more marijuana the patient must use to create the desired effect, increasing their risk of negative side effects and also diminishing their allotted pot supply permitted by law.

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Editor's Corner

Hey, ladies!

As the first semester comes to a close, everyone is on edge stressing about exams, Christmas gift exchanges and having plans to fill the 17 wonderful days of Christmas Break.

While frosting Christmas cookies is always a good way to pass time, I also suggest going to see the Lights Before Christmas at the Toledo Zoo or snuggling up with a blanket and watching *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* (my absolute favorite Christmas movie).

New Year's Eve is almost guaranteed to be a fun night- unless you're stuck babysitting and in that case, I give you my greatest sympathies.

Instead of making resolutions that you'll never keep, this year, simply try doing something everyday that makes you happy. Merry Christmas from *The Vista* staff!

~ Alyssa

YouTube Proves Necessary

As many NDA students, faculty and staff may have noticed, YouTube, the popular video-sharing web site, has been blocked by the school's Internet provider this year.

No matter the reason for blocking YouTube, school administrators should consider allowing students to access the site, at least with the supervision of responsible adults.

First of all, allowing YouTube access on NDA's computers would benefit teachers as well as students. Certain programs and television segments can be found and played easily on YouTube and would be beneficial to classroom studies.

Secondly, YouTube would make school projects that require television clips or video presentations easier for students and teachers. A lot of the videos that do play on the school's computers are of poor quality or they take so long to load that teachers become fed up and forgo using them altogether.

Also, many of the DVD players and VCRs in the school do not always function properly, making it difficult for teachers to show video programs. YouTube would therefore eliminate the stress of finding a working media player to show these videos and they could easily be viewed on the Smart Boards like television.

Another reason why the school should allow YouTube is because the web site already blocks inappropriate

material from its viewers. Although critics could still deem some YouTube material offensive since the site relies on its viewers to report offensive videos, the search engine Google has now acquired YouTube. Google's own video-sharing site has a different internet-filtering system that does a better job at catching offensive content. It is safe to say that YouTube will probably be improving its material-filtering system as well.

Brigham Young University in Utah blocked its students from accessing YouTube in 2006 because of material on the site that the university deemed offensive and contrary to the school's mission statement.

On a wider scale, entire countries such as Brazil, Thailand and the People's Republic of China have also blocked YouTube for videos those countries found insulting. Yet many videos on YouTube do have some educational merit.

For instance, many political speeches, documentaries and news segments that are worthy of study can be found on YouTube, as well as more entertaining endeavors such as skits from television shows and music videos.

Although it was blocked for some of its content, which can be considered inappropriate depending on what videos are viewed, YouTube is a vital source of media that makes teaching easier and learning accessible.

An Eagle's View Christmas Spirit Is Easier Said

MAGGIE DZIUBEK

Ironically, the holiday season causes usually docile shoppers to reach code red stress levels. At Notre Dame, exam prep elevates already stratospheric stress levels. As we enter the climax of the craziness, let us reflect on hair splitting aspects of NDA's holiday haunts.

Mr. Timothy Horton claims to offer fast food, but I often find myself whistling the Jeopardy song as I wait for my Ice Capp. At Timmie's, bagel making is a meticulous craft involving a complex bagging process, 10 pounds of cream cheese and a bathroom break.

Another fan favorite is Bea...Biggby's coffee. While a tall Caramel Marvel is the perfect prescription for exam worries, at this point I feel obligated to venture a decidedly Strauss-ish Latin phrase: caveat emptor "let the buyer beware". The Talmadge and Sylvania Biggby's is the "awkward Biggby's." You judge if the Grande Chai Latte is worth the excruciating wait (it most likely is).

For a chilled out Biggby experience, try the loft on Secor and Central. Grab your Tina Fey glasses and a cozy sweater for a truly Zen experience.

After your morning coffee, wander over to Westfield Shopping Center. Grab five chicken samples and a Lindt chocolate truffle handout and begin your expedition.

There will inevitably be signs of Christmas lurking in the mall. These include: painfully long lines, t-shirts flooding out of Forever 21 and an army of sales clerks.

Of course, the worst example is the determined individual who mans the hair straightening booth. Those of us with straight hair aren't worth the effort and a Camille Duet-level of curliness will scare off any straightener. However, mid-level waves are irresistible.

Regardless of shopping style or coffee preference, remember that easy holiday shopping is possible. In the season of charity and compassion, remember to have mercy on the inevitably over-attentive or neglectful salesperson. Perhaps your spirit of kindness will hurry along the cream cheese spreading.

Cheers and Jeers

It's important for NDA girls to keep on top of what's happening today, so here are the best and the worst of some of the most recent current events.



Cheers to advances in sanitizing shopping carts. More germs can be found on carts than on public toilets.



Water and snacks will be sold during exams to benefit the people of Congo through Project Kikwit, Congo.



Massachusetts residents are getting paid to recycle. What a way to help the environment and stimulate the economy.



Jeers to Christmas music starting before Thanksgiving. After more than a month, it has gotten a little tiring.



The mountain gorillas are almost completely extinct. Poaching claims yet another species.



A wildfire in California was caused by a bonfire. Did they not learn anything from Smokey the Bear?

Off the Field

ELISA DURAN

Athlete: Jasmine Blanton
Sports: Basketball
Grade: 12



This is Jasmine's fourth year playing Varsity basketball. Submitted by Jasmine Blanton

How long have you been playing basketball?

I've been playing basketball since the sixth grade.

Do you plan on playing college basketball? Where?

I will probably play for Kent State, Findlay or Morehead.

What are your other hobbies?

I like hanging out with my friends and I am involved in my church's youth group.

Do you play travel basketball?

Yes, I play with girls from all over the state on a team called All-Ohio.

Who is your favorite NBA player?

My favorite player is Lebron James.

Where is the farthest place you have traveled for basketball?

I went to West Virginia and it took fifteen hours because there was a traffic jam.

What is your best basketball accomplishment?

Beating Central my sophomore year was a big deal for me.

Fitness with Snowy Sports

KATE ROMINSKI

When temperatures drop and snow begins to fall, many tend to pack up their tennis shoes, along with their motivation, and hibernate in their homes.

However, there are ways to continue a healthy lifestyle and keep an ongoing a fitness regimen during the winter months.

Keeping active in winter is beneficial to the body. Physical activity strengthens the immune system, manages weight, promotes healthy lungs and heart and improves a person's mood.

Winter sports provide a chance to get outside as well as to get moving. Cross country skiing is an easy activity for novices.

Cross country skiing is a workout for legs as well as arms. Equipment is needed, but this activity can be done on any snow covered terrain.

Senior Brittanie Kuhr has been a recreational ice skater since the age of four.

"Ice skating is a good winter sport because it uses all of your leg muscles as well as your glute muscles. You can go with your friends and forget that you

are even exercising," Brittanie said.

For a fun activity with no cost, girls can put on their snow gear and walk outside. Walking in the snow creates resistance, causing leg muscles to work harder.

While outside, they may want to take the time to build a snowman. This activity is a workout in disguise. Rolling snow is similar to lifting weights.

Working out in the winter can also be an indoor activity.

"I love to power walk in the mall, that way I can exercise and shop," sophomore Libby Colley said.

Those seeking to work out without even leaving their home can purchase the popular Nintendo Wii gaming system.

This innovative gaming experience features hand-held controllers that allow players to move their arms in games such as boxing and tennis. WiiFit is also a good virtual workout.

"If flailing your arms around while playing a game is fitness, then count me in," social studies teacher and avid gamer Mr. Matt McEwen said.

NDA Goes Varsity in '77

LAURA GERHARDINGER

NDA currently offers ten varsity sports, but until thirty years ago sports existed only as intramurals and clubs.

Intramurals were an important part of NDA before varsity sports were funded. Each class level had one team for each sport and cheerleaders. These teams practiced for many months to play only two games each in a two week period.

Notre Dame also had an athletic club, consisting of many girls interested in playing sports, but did not yet have an outlet other than intramurals.

In the '77-'78 school year, NDA entered the Toledo City League and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA). Varsity Tennis was added in the fall of the same year and Varsity Track in the spring.

"[When varsity sports were introduced] there was some resistance to leave intramural teams, but that went away after the first year," Athletic Director Pam Edgell said.

Along with additional funding, varsity sports require a huge time commitment. While the state of Ohio defines

the season for a particular sport, most athletes spend eight weeks before the season conditioning and attending summer camps at different colleges during the off-season.

For a club sport to become varsity, it must maintain popularity each year, players must be dedicated to the sport and it must have parental backing.

Basketball and Cross Country were added in the '80-'81 school year. This was also the first year the Toledo City League sponsored Cross Country.

Varsity sports were not originally created for seniors; instead, teams are made of the most talented players.

"I was nervous to run Varsity Cross Country [as a freshman] as all the girls were older, but everyone was very welcoming," junior Ellen Guisfredi said.

The highest level is varsity, so naturally the attention tends to be focused on these teams. Freshman officers usually try to encourage support for the freshman teams each year.

"I'd like to see attendance in general increase because it's part of the high school experience," Mrs. Edgell said.

Athletes Should Play for Home

COLLEEN SMYTHE

What cheers can spectators shout from the bleachers when their home team is actually composed of members from several different schools?

Such spectator confusion can occur when athletes play for schools other than the ones they attend. All school sports teams should limit participation to their own students.

An example of an NDA sports group that includes non-NDA members is the broomball program.

The broomball teams are open to students from other schools, in compliance with certain league rules.

But many area schools have their own broomball teams. Does it not make sense to try out for one's own school team before moving on to another?

Being on a team at a school a student already attends allows her to relate better with her teammates. Contacting the rest of the team is more convenient as well because she sees all teammates on a regular basis outside of practices and competitions.

If a student's school lacks a program for a sport she is interested in, there are many different sports that can serve as alternatives and students should be aware of which ones will be available when they enroll.

The matter also contains an element of school pride. What if, suddenly, anyone could try out for NDA volleyball? The school spirit on the team along with its loyalty would be brought into question immediately.

It is strange that this mentality does not seem to apply to all Eagle teams. Broomball may not be a varsity sport, but it is called Notre Dame's broomball team for a reason.

This does not mean that students should segregate themselves by what high schools they attend. Friendliness between schools exposes students to more versatile groups of people.

Support for one's own school encourages enthusiasm and unity as a group. Rivals should maintain an atmosphere of friendly competition while emphasizing each team's pride and spirit.

Athletes should stick to their own schools' teams so everyone can play and cheer for her own beloved Alma Mater.

Snapshot



Freshman Meredith Brimmer ice-skates at BGSU as a part of her synchronized figure skating team. Practices are held at BGSU or Tam O'Shanter. Meredith has been skating for seven years and participates in a various competitions during the skating season. Submitted by Meredith Brimmer

New Coaches Up to Bat

EMILY HOSTETLER

NDA holds high standards for students and faculty alike, but many may not know that coaches must also uphold Eagle values.

This year NDA welcomed a number of new coaches to the athletic community. There are also a few coaches who have been moved from being an assistant coach last year to head coach this year.

Athletic Director Mrs. Pam Edgell said that hiring coaches can be a domino effect; when one coach is moved up to a new position, his or her previous position must be filled. This was a reoccurring case this year, which led to a completely restructured Basketball staff.

"You want the person who knows NDA's system best and who will motivate the girls to work to their best potential," Mrs. Edgell said.

The process for hiring a new Varsity coach requires optional advertising, meetings and interviews. In the beginning, the Athletic Advisory Board, which consists of varsity coaches and athletic directors, meets to discuss who they will interview.

If a freshman coach is needed, it is only necessary for the athletic directors and varsity coaches to meet and

interview the candidate, then inform the principal of their decision.

The first interviews for a Varsity coach include Mrs. Edgell, assistant athletic director Mrs. Diane Clark, Varsity coaches, outside personnel who are knowledgeable in the sport or former athletes and players' parents. Last year a Varsity coach from Owens Community College came to help in the interviews. During interviews, they review résumés, recommendations and ask the applicants questions to see if they will fit into the NDA staff.

"We want to find a unique individual who fits the mold, and we will help them through the process [of becoming a part of NDA]," said Mrs. Edgell.

Second interviews are with Mrs. Edgell, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Grilliot and the Athletic Advisory Board. Not only do they ask the applicant questions, but they also do reference checks and look over notes from previous interviews.

Ms. Jessica Jordon is this year's new Varsity softball coach and is familiar with NDA's system as well as softball in general.

"Jessica Jordon was the freshman assistant coach, the freshman coach and the JV coach. Jessica was ready for the [next] step and interviewed well," Mrs. Edgell said.

Artist Sketch

MAGGIE DZIUBEK

Artist: Emily Poor
Grade: 12



Emily Poor is the president of the newly formed photography club. Submitted by Emily Poor

How did you become interested in photography?

When I was ten years old I went to a camp where I learned how to do darkroom photography. This sparked my interest, then my dad also helped teach me.

What about the photographic medium attracted you?

Honestly, I can't draw at all. What I like about photography is that you can capture everyday things and make them look pretty.

How is photography a form of self-expression?

Well, it's not exactly self expression because I don't just take pictures of myself. However, photography helps me to show my perspective of the people and things around me.

What are your plans for photography club?

We have our own assignments that we will work on throughout the year. At the end of the year, we hope to compile an end project or photo album. If that doesn't work out, we'll submit them to the literary magazine.

Do you plan on continuing photography in college?

Yes, I plan on majoring in graphic design or photography.

Twilight Entrances NDA

ALYSSA BAZ

Watch out Dracula; *Twilight* fans are lurking around every corner of the world.

Twilight is a series of novels written by Stephenie Meyer that has taken teenagers by storm. The series includes *Twilight*, *New Moon*, *Eclipse* and *Breaking Dawn*, which have sold more than 17 million copies in more than 20 languages in 37 countries.

The storyline follows teenager Isabella "Bella" Swan as she moves to Forks, Washington and falls in love with Edward Cullen, a mysterious and handsome vampire.

"The first book was by far the best. Its plot was the most developed and it felt the most inspired," senior Camille Duet said.

The *Twilight* obsession has not only hit students at NDA, but teachers as well.

"All of my students were talking about *Twilight*, so I decided to read it. I really liked the story and vampires are awesome," Mr. McEwen said.

"There is no literary merit to *Twilight* at all, but it's a good read," English teacher Mrs. Jean Walker said.

The first book, *Twilight*, was made into a movie and was released on Nov. 21 of this year. During the opening weekend, *Twilight* made over \$70.6 million.

"The movie was just okay. It didn't do much justice to the book," Camille said.

"The movie was pretty good. The glitter scene was cheesy, but the fight scene was epic and the kiss was exactly how I pictured it. Books are always bet-

ter than movies," Mr. McEwen said.

While students enjoy some books more than others, the *Twilight* series has gone above and beyond the expectations of NDA readers. Those who have not read the series are confused when *Twilight* enthusiasts quote the book in everyday conversation, or when they see Facebook bumper stickers expressing undying devotion to Edward Cullen.

Freshmen Nique Woodward and Julia Chandler recently had NDA's *Twilight* club approved by Ms. Cousino, with Mrs. Amy Johns as their moderator.

"We decided to start the *Twilight* club because there are a lot of students who enjoyed the stories. There is something for everyone in the series," Nique said.

The first *Twilight* Club meeting was held Friday, Dec. 5 during the first half of lunch. Nique and Julia plan to have meetings every Friday. At meetings, the girls discuss chapters of the books and do activities relating to the story.

"I think *Twilight* created such a craze because it is filling the void of the *Harry Potter* series. It also appeals to teenage girls, which is a very large constituency," Camille said.

"*Twilight* is the story of a very unlikely romance. Everyone wishes they were dating someone like Edward Cullen," Julia said.

"NDA girls are so crazy about *Twilight* because Edward Cullen is hot," Mr. McEwen said.

Stephenie Meyer was planning on writing another book, *Midnight Sun*, which would be the *Twilight* book from Edward's point of view. However, the first 12 chapters of the story were il-

legally posted on the Internet, leaving Meyer too upset and un-inspired to finish the book.

The amount of student interest in the *Twilight* series is sure to make a mark in the history of popular culture, just as *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* series have done before it.



Freshmen Alyssa Zarich and Jessie Baird enter the movie theater at Westfield Mall to see *Twilight* opening night. The film made \$36 million in one night. Photo by Alyssa Baz

Eagles' Voices Hit High Notes

ELISA DURAN

While some people cringe at the thought of singing in front of large crowds, the girls in choirs at Notre Dame enjoy doing just that.

To be a member of the honors choir, the Bel Canto Choir, a Notre Dame student must first take the class Women's Chorus and then audition for Bel Canto. This year there are 32 girls in Women's Chorus and 28 girls in Bel Canto.

"I've been in choir for three years and I always decide to come back because I love singing and I just get closer and closer with all the girls every year," junior choir member Carley Cook said.

Carley is a mezzo, which is also known as a second soprano. These vocalists are right in the middle of the vocal range and can sing high notes or low notes. Altos, who sing the low notes, and sopranos, who sing the highest notes, are the two other parts of the choir.

Being in choir is also a time commitment for the girls. Not only does a girl have to attend the required class, there are also several concerts outside of school time that the girls have to rehearse for and attend.

Girls who have obtained three or more credits in choir classes are considered Vocal Majors at Notre Dame.

In previous years, the Bel Canto Choir has traveled to Chicago and participated in workshops with Broadway performers.

This year the choir was scheduled to travel to Indiana to perform in the Women's Chorus Invitational at Saint Mary's College on Friday Nov. 21; however, the trip was unexpectedly canceled due to bad weather.

"It's more of a festival than a competition," Choir Director Mrs. Amy Johns said.

The choirs will also be taking part in the All Catholic School Concert. This concert will take place at Notre Dame Academy in the Performing Arts Center on Dec. 16. This concert includes choirs from all of the Catholic high schools in Toledo.

This year the choir is planning on being very busy with at least six concerts scheduled along with their regular performances in school liturgies and assemblies.

New Cinematic Adventures

EMILY HOSTETLER

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button

MPAA rating: PG-13
Release Date:
December 25, 2008

Newborns are usually pictured as cute babies with soft skin and irresistible chubby cheeks. In *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, the story is very different.

Benjamin Button, played by Brad Pitt, astonishes doctors and nurses when he is born as an 80 year old baby with wrinkles and tiny white hairs on his head. It is not long before his unusual circumstance becomes apparent as he is diagnosed as a man who ages backwards.

The story begins during World War I in New Orleans from 1918 until the twenty-first century. Based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's short story, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," the fantastic tale of a man who experiences life like no other man will open viewer's eyes to the unimaginable.

Cate Blanchett plays Daisy, Benjamin's curious friend beside Jason Flemyng as Thomas Button, Benjamin's father. Director, David Fincher, shares his adaptation of this moving narrative.

Watch Benjamin's journey unfold through joy, love and sadness as he is taught that some things last longer than time itself.

Yes Man

MPAA rating: PG-13
Release date:
December 19, 2008

Carl Allen is a man whose negativity overwhelms him. His only answer in life is "no," which keeps him from getting a better job, a girlfriend and being truly happy.

Jim Carrey is a favorite funny guy known for his starring role in *Bruce Almighty* and various other comedies.

In *Yes Man*, Jim Carrey plays Carl Allen, a man who is stubborn and obnoxious.

The story follows Carl, who can not seem to get a handle on life, always saying "no," until he signs up for a seminar which will help him learn to say "yes." There is one catch to the program; Carl Allen must promise to always say "yes," to everything.

He soon finds himself immersed in a world of possibilities, doing things he never believed he could ever manage, like learning Japanese. But, as most good things, too much of it can turn into a bad thing.

Prepare for knee slapping hilarity with witty one-liners and a touch of romance because *Yes Man* is sure to be a terrific show to see with good friends on a Friday night.

The Tale of Despereaux

MPAA rating: G
Release date:
December 19, 2008

The delectable childhood book, *The Tale of Despereaux*, comes to life when a small mouse blessed with enormous ears finds himself on a quest to save a beautiful human, Princess Pea.

Despereaux, a curious and extraordinarily brave mouse, lives in Mouseworld with an entire civilization of mice nestled under Dor, a human kingdom obsessed with soup.

After being outlawed from Mouseworld for proclaiming himself "neither a man nor mouse, but a gentleman," Despereaux meets Roscuro, a rat and fellow outcast.

Roscuro turns to the dark side after Princess Pea rejects his friendship and instead becomes an ally to princess want-to-be Mig.

Despereaux's bravery is put to the test, as he becomes a knight in shining armor in order to save his kidnapped friend, Princess Pea.

There is something about a mouse that is simply adorable. It could be the innocent round eyes or the fact that they are outright huggable; either way *The Tale of Despereaux* is bound to enchant viewers of all ages.

Holy Toledo!

KATE ROMINSKI

What's Happening at Catholic Schools around Toledo?

What was your favorite childhood toy?



"Sit n' Spin!"

Connor Gavin, SFS Senior



"My Barbies, because I've always been a Barbie Girl."

Ginny Dillon, NDA Sophomore



"My American Girl Bitty Baby."

Colleen Irmen, SUA Freshman



"Nintendo 64, because I love Mario."

Dan Hanna, SJJ Junior

Alum Spotlight

EMILY HOSTETLER

Mrs. Heidi N. Eischen, a 1993 grad, is now the partner at Eastman & Smith, Ltd. where she practices labor and employment law.

"A desire to exceed others' expectations and a strong work ethic" is most important for success, Mrs. Eischen said.

She attended the University of Toledo College of Law with a full tuition scholarship. After a summer internship and employment as an associate for seven years, she was offered a membership position.

Mrs. Eischen counsels employers about making decisions in their companies and represents them before administrative agencies and courts all over Ohio.

She hopes to have daughters to send to NDA.

"I still miss wearing the NDA uniform. Everyday I wear a suit and high heels, and I miss the grey plaid, acrylic sweaters and Doc Martens," Mrs. Eischen said.



Heidi Eischen '93

How To Make Holiday Shopping Simple

KATE ROMINSKI

The art of gift giving can be difficult to master. Every holiday season, searching for Christmas gifts can be stressful.

Instead of giving a typical, dull present, look for items that are original and special.

When buying for your mother look for gifts that she will appreciate. Hire a personal chef for an evening and give mom the night off.

If you are looking for something less pricey, put on an apron yourself and cook dinner.

Mom would also love gifts that let her pamper herself, such as a pedicure kit or a gift card to Designer Shoe Warehouse.

Instead of getting your father a lackluster tie, give him a back massager that hooks right onto the back of his office chair.

For something less expensive, make dad a personalized coffee mug along

with a package of an exotic coffee blend.

Grandparents love anything sentimental or crafty. Find an old photograph and frame with a picture frame decorated by you.

You could also write a poem or create them a handmade card.

When buying for your siblings, don't get them money.

For your sister, look for perfumes at Sephora or Ulta. Get her samples of your favorites and a gift card so she can purchase her preferred scent.

If you're looking for a gift that's not as costly, you can never go wrong with chocolate.

If you're buying a gift for a brother, look for items that interest him.

For instance, if he likes music, get him an iTunes gift card or a magazine subscription to *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Help your brother freshen up his wardrobe with a cashmere pullover.

Your boyfriend says he wants cologne, but what he really wants is tickets to *The Lights Before Christmas* at the Toledo Zoo and a new pair of leather driving gloves.

If you are on a tight budget, make him a CD and give him small gifts to go with each song.

Look for gifts for your best friend that she would not normally buy for herself such as a nice wallet.

Put together a gift basket for her that includes nail polish, movies and chocolate covered raisins. You both could enjoy this gift over a girl's night in.

Secret Santa gifts can be tricky to find. If your budget is about \$10, make a homemade batch of cookies or get a flavored hot chocolate set. You could also make a donation to charity in the name of your recipient.

When buying a gift, remember to look beyond materialistic items and find meaning behind what you are giving.