



VOLLEYBALL PANDAS SET FOR STATE. 6



SEE THE FRUITS OF PANDAS' HALLOWEEN COSTUME EFFORTS. 10

THE GAVEL



Pandas united in act of shear sisterhood

Notre Dame students volunteered their time and their hair for a good cause as part of the Fall Pep Rally before the Playing for a Purpose game. Their locks were collected to make wigs through the Pantene Beautiful Lengths program, a sign of their support for those affected by breast cancer. *(Ava Thaman photo)* **Story, 3.**

***Crucible*: Freshmen cast in significant roles**

BY ELLIE O'HARA

Gavel staff writer

With all the excitement and buzz of the new year comes the fall play. As the first of four productions makes its way to the stage, incoming freshmen giggle with anticipation for their very first show with Notre Dame Academy.

"I think what I've learned from this show already makes me stronger, and more assertive. I am genuinely excited to perform," freshman Kylie Kreisa said

Kylie Kreisa was one of five brave freshmen cast in the NDA/CCH production of *The Crucible*, performed Oct. 21-23 at NDA. Arthur Miller's play tells the story of witchcraft and the consequences of lying.

The five -- Kylie Kreisa, Noel Baler, Grace Caccavari, Maya Batshoun and Lainey Renaker -- took the risk of auditioning and were cast into the production. Last year, only three were chosen for *The Tempest*: Haley Planika, Macy Seiter, and Ellie O'Hara.

With that said, the fall play is one of the hardest shows to make as a freshman because you're new to the program. So it's an honor to be chosen for the cast at such a young age -- especially for Kreisa, who was cast in the significant role of Betty Parris. "I was stoked!" Kreisa said. "I may or may not have run around my house screaming. But the older kids really scared me."

Through the many practices that followed, Kreisa soon was not as intimidated as she was in the beginning. She and the other freshmen were happy to be welcomed into the NDA theatre family.

Coming into the theatre department as a new member takes a lot of courage. While being cast into the fall play as a freshman is a relatively rare occurrence, it is all based upon whether the show is right for you. As Ms. Stine said, "For some people, this is simply not the show for you. That's why we do four shows a year -- it means we have a place for everyone." That's exactly what the drama program is about, having a place for everyone. So welcome all new freshmen into the theatre family and welcome to all the future performers soon to come!



Noel Baker (possessed girl), Maya Batshoun (possessed girl), Kylie Kreisa (Betty Parris), Grace Caccavari (possessed girl) and Lainey Renaker (townsperson) are freshmen in NDA's production of *The Crucible*. (Ellie O'Hara photo)

NEXT FOR NDA THEATRE: SHOWCASE DECADES

Performances: Dec. 2-4

Playing important, but Purpose is even bigger

BY AVA THAMAN

Gavel staff writer

The annual Playing for a Purpose game took place on September 23 this year. The Notre Dame Academy Pandas beat their rivals, the St. Henry Crusaders, 25-18, 25-22, 25-12. But that's only part of the story.

For those of you who haven't heard of this, it is the biggest volleyball game in Northern Kentucky. It supports and raises money for the I Have Wings Breast Cancer foundation. It is for a great cause and always brings the two schools together for a fun-filled game.

NDA students kicked off the day by wearing all pink to school to support breast cancer awareness. The Pandas held a pep rally which included seven brave students who let teachers cut 8 inches off their locks to donate to make wigs for cancer survivors. So amazing!

At the game, St. Henry student Alex Shea was also honored. Over the past year, he has been fighting his own type of cancer, Hodgkin's lymphoma. To the relief of his family and friends, he had his checkup and is officially in remission. The Panda and Crusader communities came together to celebrate the wonderful news, which left some in tears. St. Henry pulled some strings for him to meet some of his favorite football players, including Jake Fisher, offensive tackle for the Cincinnati Bengals. Alex's excitement was contagious and left everyone in the building in smiles.

Two students from Notre Dame Academy, Kelsey Schwarber and Jenna Woods, and their mothers were recognized during the event. Each student has been fighting their own fight with dealing with the diagnosis of their beautiful moms. It was inspiring to everyone on how much they love and support their mothers and grandmothers.

This year was a sellout, and students filled the gym to its capacity of 1,200 by 6:30.

It was a great game and a great ceremony. Until next year!



The Pandas packed Thomas More College's Connor Convocation Center for the Playing for a Purpose game on September 23. NDA beat St. Henry in volleyball on a night that was more about raising money and awareness for the fight against cancer.

Cerimele among Cincy's outstanding educators, mag says

BY SOPHIE MIDDENDORF

Gavel staff writer

Notre Dame Academy's very own Mr. Greg Cerimele has been recognized as one of The Best of the Best teachers in the Cincinnati area. Cincy Magazine's 2016 Outstanding Educators Recognition Program selected those that went above and beyond expectation.

This year, they received twice as many nominees, from public and private schools in Ohio and Kentucky. NDA was well represented with recently retired teachers Mrs. Linda Bricking (English) and Mrs. Connie Roenker (math) also being honored.

Mr. Cerimele is a teacher with many talents. Here at Notre Dame, he teaches math and technology. He is also the Chair of the Fine Arts Department. One of his biggest jobs is being the Band Director, both here and at Covington Catholic.

"It was really nice to receive this award, and I was surprised." Mr. Cerimele said. "It is a great feeling to know that you are being appreciated and recognized within the community." Mr. Cerimele did not even know that he had been nominated for this award.

One of Mr. Cerimele's favorite part of teaching is directing the band, even though it is really involved. According to Mr. Cerimele, there is a major need for music teachers and marching bands in the Diocese of Covington.

Mr. Cerimele said he realized in his freshman year in high school that he wanted to



Mr. Greg Cerimele wears many hats at NDA: teaching math (as he is pictured here) and technology, directing band for NDA and Covington Catholic, and chairing NDA's Fine Arts department. Mr. Cerimele recently was named one of Cincy Magazine's 2016 Outstanding Educators. *(Sophie Middendorf photo)*

be a teacher. His band teacher was also a math teacher at his school. The football coach at his high school was also his algebra teacher. He knew that one could teach and do other things, like band. He thought about being a journalist but then realized he was not comfortable interviewing people and it was too stressful. For example, Mr. Cerimele waited until the night of prom to interview a member of the golf team about the season. The golfer was shocked when Mr. Cerimele asked to interview him before

(please see CERIMELE, next page)

Cerimele

continued from page 4

prom, but Mr. Cerimele managed to get the information he needed, despite the late notice.

Mr. Cerimele has been teaching math for about 30 years and absolutely loves everything about his job. He feels that being a teacher is not so much about what you teach, but rather what the students learn. He said he has had to change his methods of teaching over the years to adapt to this philosophy. He gets a sense of gratification from teaching because he knows that he's making a difference. He feels that the Notre Dame community has always been open to

his ideas and thoughts about improving the school.

Mr. Cerimele's son Michael is also a teacher at Notre Dame Academy. Mr. Cerimele is very proud of his son. In fact, almost everyone in his family is in the teaching field. Mr. Cerimele feels that he inspired his son in music because he was always his band director. In fact, they still play music together at church.

Mr. Cerimele credits many at Notre Dame for achieving this award.

"The teachers I work with at Notre Dame are just as qualified as me to win this award," he said. "I was so proud to win, but the support system I have here is a huge part of my success. There are so many people here that I have to thank."

Clinton or Trump or Johnson? Oh my!

Senior Pandas look forward to their first presidential vote

BY JAY MULLAGURU

Gavel staff writer

It is common knowledge that when you turn 18, voting is a newfound right that you can utilize as an American citizen.

Many of our Panda seniors are turning 18 before November 8, the date of the 2016 presidential elections. This means that they will have the very special honor of voting for our next president of the United States of America.

A survey was sent to the graduating class of 2017 and 63 girls answered; of those responses, 27 percent said they would be old enough to vote in the elections.

"While I am very excited to vote in a presidential election, I am very disappointed with the candidates. But I still want to vote,"

said senior Claire Lonneman, who recently turned 18.

This year is a very historical election and such an important one for a school like NDA that educates and empowers women to make a difference in the world because this is the first year that a woman has been selected as a major party presidential nominee.

Lauren Lawler, another senior who will be voting in the upcoming election, said, "Voting makes me feel like an adult because I am able to have say in who runs our country, even though I don't like the candidates at all.

"Plus, it's something I can do that my friends can't."

This election definitely looks to be a close one, and many seem unsure of who will be the next leader for the upcoming four years.

Staying loose, having fun, playing for each other

BY LAINEY STEPHENSON

Gavel staff writer

Lainey Stephenson, a junior publications student, writes what it's like to return to the state volleyball tournament. The Pandas play Mercy on Friday at Valley High School in Louisville.

I have been playing volleyball since I was 3 years old, and I have played with many different types of players. Some of them were star players, like Morgan Hentz, Gatorade Kentucky Player of the Year, Miss Kentucky Volleyball, and Under Armour All-American, along with many other accolades. Morgan makes a huge impact on the people who she plays with, and she left her mark on the Notre Dame Academy volleyball program.

Since Morgan graduated last spring, we had to develop a new identity. We are simply a group of teenage girls who love playing volleyball. And we're going back to the state tournament.

This volleyball season's theme is, "Push. Fall. Rise. Repeat." Our coach, Buck McCoart, has been telling us all season to stay loose, have fun, and play for each other. I believe this is the reason why we have been so successful this season.

Maybe our record isn't what NDA is used to, but, in my opinion, we have overachieved this season. We are and have been undefeated in NKY (three years running now) and we won the second-toughest region in the state, which is quite an accomplishment. There isn't anything in the world that I wouldn't do for my teammates. We all play for each other and have the time of our lives doing it. We are not superstars; we need everyone on the team to play their best in order for us to win. What we are is a bunch of girls who love playing volleyball and love playing for each other.



Lainey Stephenson, a junior setter and outside hitter for the volleyball Pandas, was named to the Ninth Region all-tournament team along with teammates Sarah Draud, Natalie Hardig, and MVP Jackie Noll.

Volleyball Pandas take family literally

BY CAROLYN COLLINS

Gavel staff writer

The Notre Dame volleyball program has had many sets of sisters on the team through the years. This is something special that most people don't get to experience.

"It's great having sisters on the team," said Buck McCoart, head coach of the NDA varsity, which won the Ninth Region championship with a five-set victory over St. Henry. "We preach to the kids about being a strong, family unit, and that's how we're going to succeed, so having sisters with a pre-developed bond only adds to the effectiveness of that message."

On this year's varsity team there are two sets of sisters: the Hardigs, Caroline (senior) and Natalie (junior), and the Nolls, Jackie (senior) and Abby (sophomore).

"Having my sister on the team and on the court with me is the best feeling," Jackie said. "Being a part of a team is already an amazing experience, but being able to share this experience with my sister makes it worth so much more." Abby agreed that playing with her sister is something she enjoys. She loves having Jackie as a leader on the court and being able to look up to her.

Collectively, all of the sisters agreed that they treat their sisters more as competitive teammates on the court than they do at home. They have bonded with each other and have become closer by being on the same team.

Asked if they are harder on their sisters than other teammates, Jackie said she is protective of her sister and wants her to keep a positive mind, since she is only a sophomore. Caroline and Natalie give each other more tips on the court by yelling, but are also very helpful to one another in play.

Each was asked if she likes taking this level of sisterhood onto the court, and Natalie said, "Yes, I genuinely like playing with my sister. I love how when I'm having a bad game, she understands that and is right there to pick me up because I would do the same for her."

These Pandas said they would never forget being



Abby (left) and Jackie Noll (front), and Caroline and Jackie Hardig comprise two sets of sisters on the Notre Dame Academy varsity volleyball team. *(photo courtesy of Caroline Hardig)*

on the same team with their sisters.

McCoart said the biggest difference in having a younger team this year, compared with last season's state semifinal team, is the amount of learning and teaching that is going on.

"The kids are wide-eyed and hungry for the information that is going to make them better," he said. "They understand failure is part of the process, and they've learned to accept that. While failure obviously isn't the desired result, the kids understand the most important part of this process is getting back up, dusting themselves off and going at it again. They know that's how they are going to succeed."



The JV Pandas break from the starting box at the Scott Classic. It's not all Pandas, we promise; some runners from other schools are at right. (Bob Jackson photo)

Majority rules

With 84 girls competing, the XC team outnumbered the region

BY LAUREN LAWLER

Gavel staff writer

If you told the runners in the class of 1998 that 40 girls on a cross country team wasn't a big deal, they would have looked at you as if you were crazy. "We had the largest cross country team at the time, and our shirts said 'majority wins,'" said coach Kate Marx, NDA '98.

Little did she know in 17 years she would be coaching the new largest cross country team in Notre Dame history. The team competes with 84 girls, making it the largest in the region.

On Saturday, NDA competes at the state cross country meet at the Kentucky Horse Park.

The cross country team comprises almost one-seventh of the Notre Dame student body. With this many girls you are bound to have a lot of school spirit on the team.

Before each race, Panda runners huddle to pray a Hail Mary and cheer, 'Marching.' You likely can hear the girls from a good distance away.

"I think it's intimidating for other schools to see how many runners we have," Marx said. Schools in the region compete with teams of as few as six girls and as large as 30.

You might be wondering, does every girl run? Or is it even possible to enter every girl in the race?

Yes! Every girl on the team competes in every race besides regionals and state. Those races are for varsity only. Varsity is the top 10 and it is determined by fastest times on the team.

The lineup is always changing; you can run JV one weekend, and the next run varsity. It really just depends on if your time is getting faster or slower. This brings out a lot of competition.

With only the top 10 running varsity, that leaves 74 girls to run the Open/JV race.

"We take up about three starting boxes, in comparison to most teams that only get one," senior Macy Moriconi said.

The cross country Pandas placed first in the Diocesan Meet. Elly Piatt placed first in the varsity race with a time of 19:46 and Natalie Gerdes placed first in the JV race with a time of 21:58.

The team also placed first overall at the Scott Classic.

From the runners cheering on the sidelines to supporting each other during the race, the team definitely shows a lot of love toward one another.

Senior Sarah Wehrman said, "I love running cross country because I get to excel with other girls who I wouldn't normally talk to because of grade level, and there's always a ton of support as I cross the finish line."

Soccer

Pandas get past injuries to win Ninth Region title

**BY NICOLE LaMARRE
and LAINEY STEPHENSON**
Gavel staff writers

Sarah Schuh and Sidney Spivey suffered knee injuries. Allison Robertson injured her neck. Riley Shelton missed a month with a bad ankle sprain.

And despite all the bad luck on the injury front, the soccer Pandas worked hard to keep their high hopes and goals alive, and made it all the way back to the Ninth Region championship game, where they avenged an earlier loss with a 1-0 victory over Highlands.

Sarah Schuh, a senior, tore her ACL in the Mason High School game on August 22. She explained that when it happened, the pain wasn't shocking; she thought she had simply pulled her hamstring. She said she is experiencing no pain, which made her hope she might be able to play in the postseason, but that was ruled out. Instead, surgery was needed.

But Sarah's dedication was apparent; she wanted to give it her all as it is her last year in her Notre Dame Academy uniform. "It's not how I imagined my senior year, but there is nothing I can do besides cheer my team to a state championship!" she said.

Allison, a junior, is recovering from surgery for her neck injury.

Riley, a senior, missed four weeks of playing time to her ankle injury. She played her first game back against Highlands.

Sidney, a senior, tore her ACL and meniscus on October 1, Senior Day.

Her sister Morgan, a sophomore JV player, had suffered the same injury.



Allison Robertson (left) injured her neck, and Sarah Schuh hurt her knee. NDA withstood their injuries and others to win the Ninth Region championship. *(Nicole LaMarre photo)*

But not all the injury news was bad. Senior Christin Sherrard made quite the comeback after undergoing two ACL surgeries in the past two years, scoring in NDA's victory over Covington Latin to open the district tournament.

The Pandas returned to the state tournament, where they dropped a 2-1 decision to West Jessamine.

Halloween



Dr. Jackson's *The Book Thief* character is haunted by Kayla Keinger and Natalie Snyder. Below, clockwise from left: Sarah Wehrman and Maddie Deye; Chloe Esmeier; Kennedy Hill; The Minions (Ms. Ericson, Mrs. Benkert, Mrs. Hildreth); Antigone McCarthy; Emily Thaman and Annie Gronotte.

