

THE GRAND ARMY OF REPORTERS



SPORTS

OPINION EDITORIAL

FEATURES

SENIOR CLASS T-SHIRT TO BE REVEALED

OFFICERS EMILY ENGLE AND ALEXANDRA GOMEZ DISCUSS THE 2021 SENIOR CLASS DESIGN



To many students, the Senior T-Shirt is a mystery.

As the new year approaches, the members of the senior class are anxious about those special events that they've waited twelve years for. Whether it's a school dance or a piece of clothing, the seniors will hold on to every memory.

Emily Engle (Senior Class President) and Alexandra Gomez (Senior Class Vice President) shared some information regarding the senior class t-shirts.

The officers, led by Engle meet regularly to discuss important key issues for their Senior class. "It was a group effort to come up with the senior t-shirt designs," Engle said.

"A memorable design is key to the class t-shirt", Gomez added.

"The front of the shirt will be a classic friends logo with 20:21 and the text, 'the one where we all graduate'. The back will be 'SENIOR' and 2021 will replace the 'I' and a cap will be on top of the 'S'."

Engle pointed out that as class officers, they are trusted to make the best decisions for the class especially with respect to key events/issues like the Senior class T-Shirt. Turmoil, discrepancies, and not meeting deadlines of previous years played into the decision.

"Over the last few years, there were many arguments about shirts in previous classes".

Both officers took many ideas into consideration.

"We all did some research and thought about what is popular and what looks nice. We thought about what the majority of the senior class might like", said Gomez.

Engle pointed out, "Shirts will be finalized before December 1st and Seniors can be on the lookout for their T- shirt very soon. We hope to have them ordered before the new year."

The Senior class officers hope to keep the events coming whether there is a return to in-person learning or virtual. The question will be if the Seniors will be up for it.

Story by Kelsey Bellus



Jamese Holmes pictured in All-American Cheer Gear



Mr. Jeff Andrejko (photo courtesy King's College Men's BBALL page)

STUDENT/TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

SENIOR, JAMESE HOLMES AND HISTORY TEACHER, JEFF ANDREJKO HIGHLIGHT OUR SPOTLIGHTS

Individual team members attending UCA camp can try out for the honor of being named a UCA All-American. An individual award is given to those who display superior technical skills, leadership, and strong personal values.

Q: Why did you decide to tryout for All-American?

A: I decided to tryout for All American because I've already lost so much with cheerleading like not being able to go to camp and as a senior, it's something that you look forward to start off the season with. When the opportunity came, I was happy to take it because it was something that reminded me of camp, and I wanted to start my senior year with something I loved to do.

Q: What did you have to do to make All-American?

A: I had to learn a dance that they sent you to try out with, and after I recorded myself I had to post the video on YouTube unlisted, so they were the only people that can see the video.

Q: How did it feel to make All-American?

A: I felt really good making All American because it is my senior year and it was something I was looking forward to. It is a great opportunity to meet new people and go places that you never went before.

Q: How was trying out different from in person to virtual?

A: It was different trying out virtually to in person because virtually, you have multiple times to get the perfect video to send in and you don't get to see the judges faces when you're trying out. In person, you get to learn the dance with your team and tryout with them. Also, you get one chance to wow the judges, and you have support from your team and the other teams around you.

Mr. Andrejko is a history teacher at GAR High School who also teaches Senior Seminar. He has been one of the most well-liked teachers and continues to be selected Most Favorite Teacher.

Q: How has COVID-19 affected your teaching?

A: It has taken the personal touch away from teaching. I don't feel like I have the same connection to the students.

Q: Do you feel that quarantine has had a mental impact on you?

A: Yes! I find it myself struggling to become motivated to do my normal tasks.

Q: How has COVID impacted your family?

A: Both of my children were away at college, thankfully for them. Since they have been home, I feel as if we have become closer because they are not going out with friends and are stuck in the house with me!!!!!!

Q: Is being a teacher the career path you wanted to take? If not, what was your original career choice

A: My original plan was business/marketing. I switched to education my Junior year of College.

Q: What is your opinion on virtual learning? Has it affected your teaching?

A: I think there is nothing like in person learning. But, in our situation I think it is going as well as can be. It has made me more organized, and forced me to exercise more (the camera does add 10lbs. You know)

THE FIRST DIGITAL NEWSPAPER OF GAR

JAMESE HOLMES INTERVIEW (CONTINUED)

Q: Where did you go last year?

A: I went to the Philadelphia Thanksgiving Parade last year.

Q: Where did you go this year?

A: This year I went to Orlando, Florida and performed in Universal Studios.

Q: Who did you meet while experiencing all of this?

A: I met UCA and UDA staff that I never seen before. I also met a couple of girls that were from Texas, Nebraska, and California.

Q: How was last year different from this year?

A: Last year was different from this year because last year, we did something all together, so I met a lot more girls, and we all performed together. This year, we had to wear masks so it we couldn't really perform how we wanted and we were split into 8 groups of 7S, so we all couldn't perform together.

Q: What do you feel like you missed out on because of COVID?

A: I feel like I missed out on a lot of things because of Covid. I missed out on taking pictures without masks on and having to meet new people, and also having to stand 6 feet apart from everyone.

Q: Do you feel like you could have experienced and done a lot more if it wasn't restricted because of COVID?

A: Yes, I do feel like I could of experienced and done a lot more if it wasn't restricted because of Covid. I feel like this because more of the rides at Florida could have been opened and meeting new people from All American could have been a lot easier.

BY ANALA WILLIAMS



MR. ANDREJKO INTERVIEW (CONTINUED)

Q: Do you believe virtual learning is going to affect the grade point averages of today's students?

A: Yes, but I also believe those students who are motivated and focused will maintain their grades. Unfortunately, I believe this can be a built-in excuse for some students whose grades have dropped.

Q: Do you believe virtual learning has made the lives of today's parents easier or harder than what they were? Why or why not?

A: Harder. There is a lot more pressure put on the parents. Every aspect of being a good parent...caretaker, provider and mentor has just intensified.

Q: Do you believe that the COVID vaccine will be a success? Why or why not?

A: Yes. As a history teacher, I believe that history repeats itself. We will have a vaccine that works, because people have studied and understand what is needed to prevent the spread.

Q: Have you noticed a change within yourself or other teachers due to virtual learning?

A: The reality is that I have not had much contact with other teachers because of COVID. I actually find myself working harder and putting more of an effort into teaching, because it is like starting all over again. This old dog is learning new tricks. (Wow that was bad, but I don't care)

Q: 10. Do you see yourself becoming more successful because of COVID? If so how?

A: Yes, you have to. You cannot allow something like this to destroy your attitude. We will all come out of this stronger and hopefully a better society.

Interview by Makhia Kenner

WHERE'S THE SPIRIT

VIRTUAL SPIRIT WEEK FLOPS AMID STUDENT APATHY



Teara Deonarine, senior, models different examples from Spirit Week.

By Jason Victoria Bonilla

Two different perspectives helped highlight the past Spirit week held at GAR. The prompts were well chosen and simple, and when it came to how they were selected, Mr. Peters had the senior class officers help pick the days as they have done in the past.

When asked about this year's spirit week performance, Taleeah Butler, Senior, said that spirit week was a "bust this year."

"I feel as though if everyone was able to be in the school building this year, spirit week would've been much better. Also not many people knew about spirit week."

She also stated that too little people had participated.

Principal Peters disagreed, "I don't know if I would call it a bust, but yeah it wasn't as successful as in the past. We did our best to get the word out and try and bring some type of normalcy and fun to this whole frustrating experience. But it wasn't as successful as we hoped."

Spirit week might have been able to be improved upon if the staff had students draw more attention to the event on social media, as was unsuredly proposed by Mr. Peters.

Butler on the other hand stood firm in her stance that teachers and faculty should have been more vocal, and actively participated more in order to inspire the students to get involved.

There is no doubt that the pandemic had a hand when it came to negatively impacting spirit week's performance.

Mr. Peters was able to elaborate on why, "We are limited in how we can motivate the students when they are not here in person. Usually, the students enjoy seeing one another and their teachers all dressed while they are in school. It's not the same feeling or experience when done virtually."

Butler shared this sentiment as a student who also did not partake in spirit week.

Peters was not sure whether or not the timing of the event had something to do with the way spirit week resulted. He said that perhaps, if there was a better time to host the event, it would have been around the time they usually held it.

"I just wanted to try and give the students an opportunity to do something fun that they normally are able to do when we are in person."

Butler claimed that spirit week should have been held at the beginning of the year when students were excited for school and were still allowed to attend school in person, while committing to safety procedures.

"I was the one who thought about doing it and ran it by Mrs. Robatin, who agreed that we should try it. Then we notified Mr. Wasielewski who got in touch with the class officers. Once they came up with the days and schedule, we posted it on the school webpage and made daily announcements about it. I also know that a number of teachers posted the information to their Google Classes", concluded Peters.

WOLFPACK BOYS BASKETBALL PREVIEW



WOLFPACK BASKETBALL READIES FOR THE UNEXPECTED

By Brady Melovitz

2020 has been a strange year for everyone and as society tries to get back to what is considered normal, it is important to focus what is going on currently in our school district, specifically in sports.

The Wilkes-Barre Area Wolfpack hopes to commence the season and give all of us something to cheer for this year. Wolfpack Assistant Coach, Dale Rapson expressed his expectations for a tricky 2020/21 season hampered by Covid.

Despite the season up in the air, Rapson has some clear cut goals.

"This year we want to compete to win and to compete for championships", said Rapson.

Practices will try to be held daily along with players being able to be bussed everyday. Players however will not be allowed to practice or enter the building if they show any symptoms of being sick. During the games themselves coaches will be wearing masks on the sideline. As of right now, it seems that the players themselves will have to wear masks during the game as well.

"You know, we have already had about six games that have been cancelled. Coaches will wear masks and as of right now so will the players. It is not the most ideal situation, but it has been proven effective", said Rapson.

"When games are cancelled, the team will try to make up the games, but as we all know, nothing is guaranteed nowadays. If they can't reschedule the games, we will try their best to find an alternative opponent", expressed Rapson.

Players themselves seem to have no concern about Covid while they are preparing for this season. Some of the players have already been playing basketball before the season officially begins. As of right now, there will be about three hundred and sixty people allowed in attendance for games. This includes players, coaches and cheerleaders.

Due to the latest order by Governor Wolf, all athletic and basketball games are on hold until January 4th 2021.

Opinion Editorial: We Need to do More in Recognizing Child Abuse

By Jason Victoria Bonilla



Child protective services need improvement when it comes to the handling of its cases and the identification of such cases. There are too many stories where a narrative is taken at face value and not looked into further, or victims are taken out of a horrible situation just to be put in a potentially worse scenario. This is something that is not talked about enough, if at all. There are people to this day that cry silently for help or refuse to seek it at all. We cannot allow such circumstances to continue to be ignored.

Whenever an agent is sent to investigate a case, they usually interview the potential victims, then search their homes and interview the accused abusers. This is a fair way of going about it except that it allows agents to be overcome by the image presented to them in those brief interviews, and are led astray.

A child can and will lie if they believe their pain is deserved or will benefit them more so than receiving assistance from strangers who could never understand them. Of course there is the argument that this doesn't make sense because, "Why would someone not take an opportunity to better their lives if there is clear injustice and trauma being pushed onto them?" No one ever chooses to live in despair. While this outlook is not necessarily wrong, most victims will admit to their abuse and try to help their situation. But that leaves the other percentage of people that think differently. If they

believe that allowing others into their lives will cause more harm than good, they will try their utmost to maintain an image of a nuclear life.

A victim may be ordered to lie by their abusers and obey without realizing the true potential that their testimony holds. If a victim fears having custody handed over to an individual or group that is similar or perhaps worse, they might strive to deceive. Yes, a potential victim's word should be trusted, but it shouldn't be relied on. It can be proven false just like any testimony given by an abuser or an accuser.

And another thing. A supposed lack of evidence does not necessarily mean that danger does not exist, people can hide wounds with makeup or clothing. And even so, the lack of physical injuries that are apparent does not mean that someone doesn't get a lamp thrown at them for using body cream incorrectly. It doesn't mean they don't get lectured day in and day out for writing their name a little messily, or that their fingers aren't threatened by a pair of scissors. If there is the slightest inkling, it should be investigated more. Obviously not in a way that would seem intrusive, but cases should be given another look. People shouldn't have to wait until they move out to be able to talk about their experiences without fear of their life being ruined. People shouldn't have to wait until they move out to be able to talk about their experiences without fear of their life being ruined.

You don't need a weapon to leave an impression. Whether it be with a belt, or a pipe, or empty handed, there is no room for debate, it's abuse. I say this because agents have walked away from cases where assailants admit to their crimes, but are given a pass because they were empty handed or they were justified in doing so. These agents need to be fired. How can someone in their right mind be okay with that sort of situation unless they themselves fall into the cycle or are simply too ignorant to have the job.

The job of an agent is not to prove that a situation is not damaging, it is to save the people that fall victim to these kinds of situations. It's unfair that the people who are too scared or too narrow minded to speak up for themselves get left behind by not only the people who neglect them actively, but by the world; by the people who have the power to DO something. Social services should be a service that actually helps people.

Please don't let these people go unnoticed. Do better at educating people on these sorts of scenarios and have resources available for people who might need them. And finally, when a victim does come forward, please don't throw them into the hands of someone just as bad, or worse. We can't keep ignoring these people any longer, especially now that they have to be trapped in a house all day with harmful people during quarantine.