

“We’re going to Disney World!”

HC Cheerleading will compete for the National Title this February in Orlando, Florida

By Juliette Carnevale

Although fall sports have come to an end at Central, the cheerleading team is still hard at work.

Every day after school they endure several exhausting hours of practice where they work on perfecting their cheers for many of Central's sports teams.

But there is also something else of great importance that they are training so vigorously for; something extremely exciting, yet equally nerve-racking. A word that hovers in the back of their mind and gnaws at their brains...nationals.

The weekend of February 7, the team will be traveling to Disney World in Florida to win the title they have been waiting to claim all year.

Their last competition was regionals at Toms River. To qualify for nationals, they needed to place first or second. Guided by determination and ambition, the girls won first place and recieved an automatic bid to nationals.

This was just what they needed to give them that little bit of extra confidence for Nationals.

Last year in Disney the girls fell short in the finals to their ultimate rivals, Dunbar, and ended up placing second. This was still an outstanding achievement, but they all were already thinking about beating Dunbar in the next competition they faced each other in.

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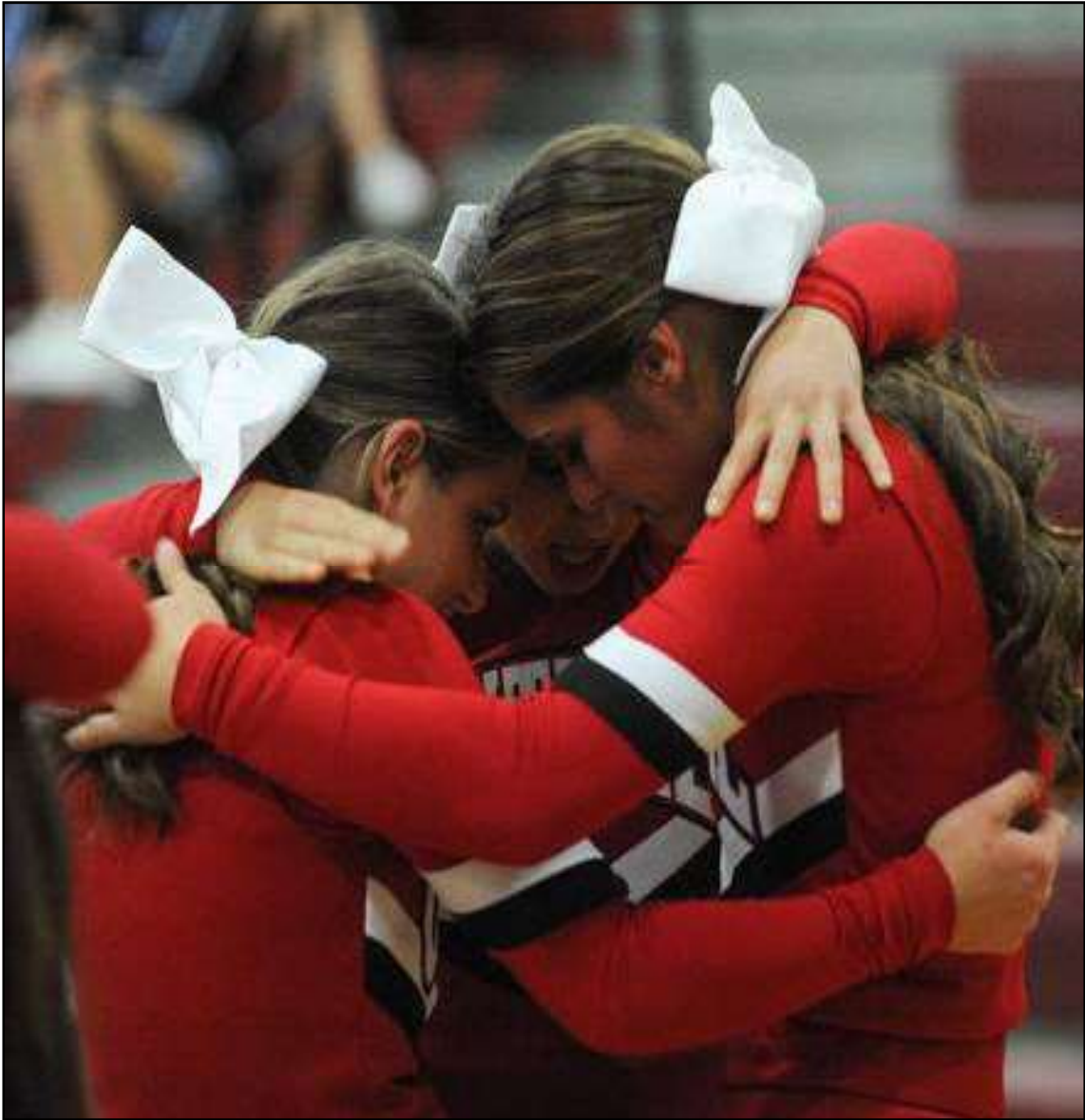


Photo courtesy of Danielle Patrick

Seniors Jamie DeGrange, Shawna DeGrange, and junior Alexa Restano huddled together before stepping on the mat at a recent competition.

New site for mural

By Annie Nazzaro
Journalism 1

A controversial mural created by last year's Honors G&T Art I class was finally approved for display in the 600s, debuting on Monday, December 9.

At the end of the last school year, Vincent D'amico's Honors G&T Art I class asked Principal Suzanne Cooley if they could hang their mural in the Commons. Before doing so, the class had already decided on the mural's subject and had nearly completed it. After seeing the mural in person, Cooley decided that the overall look of it was too negative at first glance to be displayed in that area of the school.

The mural depicts a person with light shining from them standing before a destroyed city, a scene meant to represent hope in the face of a challenge. However, Cooley believes that the destruction part of the mural may overwhelm its positive message for the viewers who would see it just in passing in the Commons. "It's a beautiful mural. The message is one of hope,"she said. "I certainly don't want to put it in a place where a large number of people would see just the destruction part of that."

A month ago, she met again with D'amico and the class to review where the mural could be placed. "I never want to dig my heels in so firmly without rethinking something," said Cooley. The class decided to hang it in the 600s eating area in the 11/12 building.

Continued on page two

Central giving back with a ‘Student Boost’

By Emily Glauber

With the onset of the college and career planning process, students at Hunterdon Central are taking every opportunity possible to enhance their résumés, especially since now more than ever, future colleges and employers are taking an avid interest in the amount of time an interviewee has spent giving back to his or her community. Commitment to volunteer work

over time shows interviewers that a teen is willing to work for something without monetary compensation—which is a major component of college internships, apprenticeships, or job shadow experiences.

Central senior Alexis Brucoleri was motivated by none of these factors when she began a non-profit organization as a sophomore, along with her older brother, Max, who was a junior at the time.

Rather, she was spurred by the

drive to assist those less fortunate, without desire for compensation or a résumé enhancer.

Brucoleri founded the organization “Student Boost” on the principle of “students helping students.” Through tutoring and educational trips, members of Student Boost assist students in underserved areas who struggle in school, all the while influencing their futures and instilling in their young minds the importance of

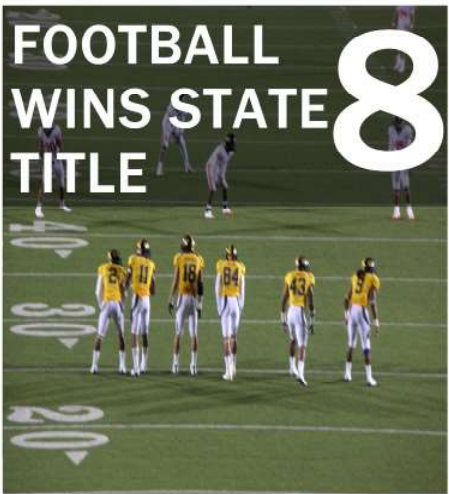
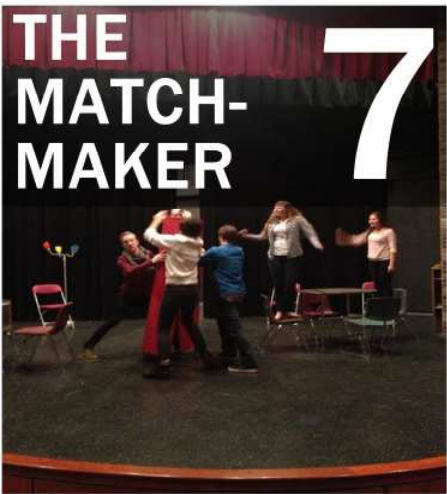
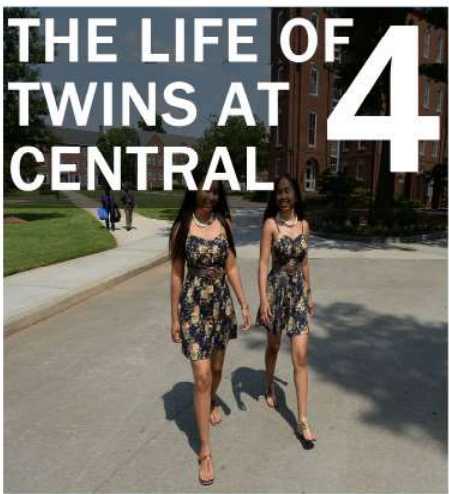
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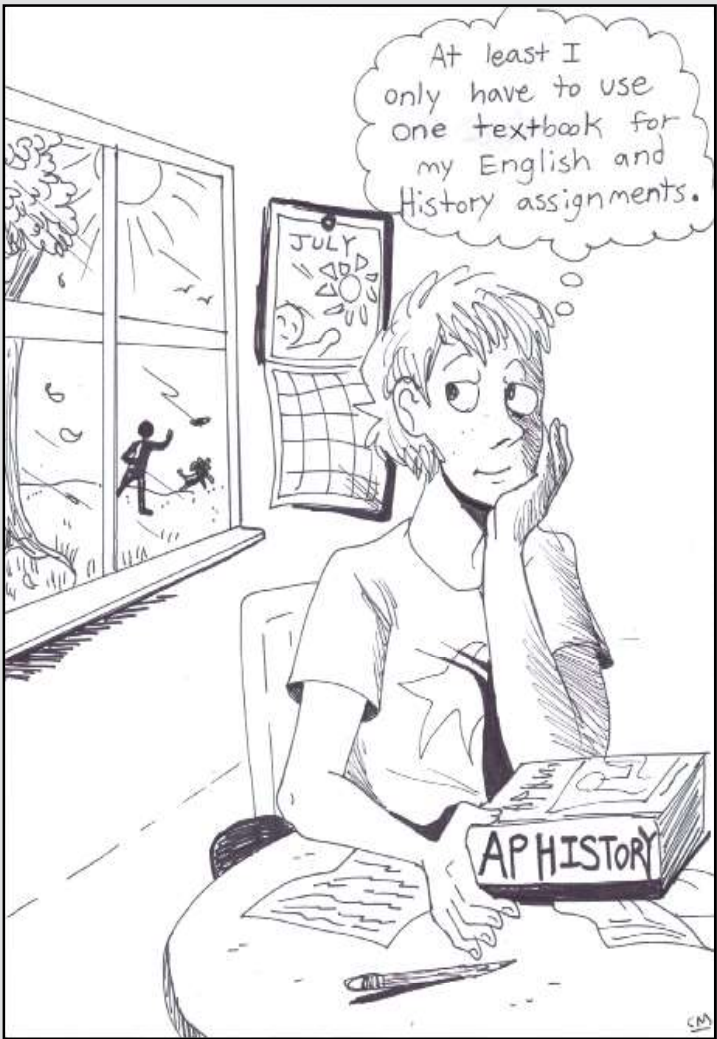
“Most of Hunterdon County is well-off financially, and I wanted to give back to people who were less fortunate,” said Brucoleri. “I’ve been so blessed and fortunate with what I have, and some kids don’t have half as much education and resources as we have.”

Continued on page three



Photo courtesy of Jenny Zhang





Cartoon by Crina Magalio

Change to Summer Homework Policy

Driven by the results of a student survey, administrators are attempting to lighten the assignment load for next summer

By Calin Nicolescu
Journalism 1

Radical changes are coming to next year's summer assignments in order to make them a more valuable experience for students, according to school administrators.

After implementing a new summer homework policy for the 2013-2014 school year that mandated assignments in all honors and AP classes, school officials have decided to revise the policy yet again. Next year's assignments will be streamlined by possibly featuring common texts for similar classes. Although plans have not been finalized, the administration has decided to follow this path.

John Fenimore, director of curriculum, believes the new assignments will be more worthwhile for students. "They wouldn't be so isolated like in a silo," he said, referring to how each class currently has its own specific assignments. Overlaps that exist will be potentially eliminated by combining assignments.

Moreover, assignments will be interdisciplinary. If a student is taking both AP/honors history and English classes, for example, the two classes may assign the same book to read, but they can have different written assignments. When classes share common themes or topics, there is a reasonable chance they will have this type of mixing. It is ultimately a decision that will be made by the department supervisors and teachers together.

Student feedback from a recent survey sent out via e-mail will be used in the decision process. The survey aimed to learn which assignments students found en-

joyable, creative, and worthwhile, among other things. Based on the results, supervisors and teachers will work together to decide which assignments to keep and which to modify. Responses to a similar teacher survey will also be used, according to Fenimore.

Although adding summer assignments to all AP and honors courses was a controversial decision—and is one that will be around for the near future—some, like German teacher Marita Glowacki, feel the move is necessary. "It is preparation ahead of the course and gives students a little exposure to the material," she said. The world language assignment, as for all language classes, deals with topics that will appear on the AP exam.

So far students have reacted positively to the changes. Many are pleased with the fact that it appears they will have less work to do and more time to enjoy their summer vacation. Hunterdon Central students such as senior Julia Ringel are also pleased to know that their opinions will be considered in the decision making process. "I thought that last year's mandatory summer homework was excessive, especially for students with a heavy course-load," she said.

Fenimore made it clear that this was the goal. "We wanted to make it less burdensome for students. Assignments will be more web-based with less writing," he said.

While the idea is new to most people, school officials have been discussing it since late spring last year, according to Fenimore. What's certain is these changes are coming, but their exact details and effectiveness remain to be seen.

Continued from page one

Junior Hope Koene, who was part of the class last year, didn't think that their design would be problematic. "It was really strange when Mr. D'amico told us because we hadn't thought it was going to be controversial at all," she said. "We were definitely really really surprised."

For the class, the destruction was necessary to support the message of hope they wanted to convey. However, it was not meant to be the focus of it. There was meant to be a distinct contrast between the shining figure in the foreground and the destruction in the background, according to D'amico.

After talking with Cooley, the

class added a quote by Helen Keller to accompany their mural and clarify that message: "All the world is full of suffering. It is also full of overcoming."

Cooley said that if the class submitted their mural for review earlier, they may have been able to come to an agreement to alter the design of the mural and make it more suitable for the Commons. In previous years, however, D'amico has rarely had to go through such a review so early in the creative process.

"Usually what happens is after it's finished it gets looked at by a supervisor or principal or vice principal and at that point we discuss where to hang it up," he said.

The students had wanted their

mural in the Commons so that the largest number of students possible could see it and be inspired by it.

"Kids are always so stressed... you never know what's going on with their friends or if their struggling with school or anything," said Koene. "We wanted kids to know that things could get better, they could rise above whatever challenges they had."

In the end, the mural has finally been displayed, just not where the students wanted. "We're dissatisfied, but we've also accepted it," Koene said. "We're happy that it's going up and people will be able to see it."

"Toys for Tots" drive provides toys for underprivileged children

By Cheyenne Smith
Journalism 1

This holiday season Hunterdon Central is giving back to the community through the "Toys for Tots" drive run by the Freshman Class Council and the music department.

Collection boxes were placed at several the 9/10 building entrance, the Commons entrance, and band room. Students and parents dropped off new, unopened, or unwrapped toys for children under the age of 12 at these locations through December 5.

According to their website, toysfortots.org, "Toys for Tots" run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, is an organization with a mission to provide joy to less-fortunate children during the holiday season. In communities where a Marine Corps Reserve Unit is located, the Marines that belong to this Reserve Unit collect and distribute the toys to their local community. In areas where there is no Reserve Unit, a Marine Corps League Detachment (generally made up of veteran Marines) facilitates the toy collecting and distributing.

Both the Freshman Class Council and music teacher William Magalio believe that "Toys for Tots" is a great way to give back to the community during the holidays. "I always felt like this was one way that anybody can give back in a way that means something to younger kids and I just want to see that everyone has a happy holiday," said Magalio.

Dan Vollrath, Freshman Class Council adviser, also enjoys helping the less-fortunate children experience the joys of the holiday season. "We feel that Toys for Tots helps

the less fortunate youngsters of America and delivers Christmas gifts to the less fortunate that might not be able to experience what most kids across America get to experience on Christmas morning," he said.

The music department has been hosting this drive for about five years and has been pleased with the outcome. "In the past we've had as many as four large bins... so we hope to at least match that this year, but we'll see what happens," Magalio said. "It's always been a little bit hit or miss," he added.

According to Tracy Lomax, the other Freshman Class Council advisor, the club's goal is to reach at least 100 toys, which may have been an optimistic goal. "It doesn't look like that will happen[...] but any little bit helps," she said.

Both organizations chose "Toys For Tots" as their fundraiser because it has an immediate effect on the community. "This is a small little tangible thing that can help a lot of kids now," Magalio said. "There are a lot of charities out there that do wonderful things to help fund research for illnesses and do some amazing things. But, they don't often help kids now, and a lot of times these things are designed to help people in the future, in the long run, which is great, but I just want to do something little to help somebody now."

Vollrath feels that this charity

also teaches the students to embrace certain values. "It also gives a sense of responsibility; it shows good citizenship, not only for the kids giving the gifts, but also the ones receiving," Vollrath said.

The music department coincides this drive with their holiday concert each year. This allows the families of the students to donate a toy and get involved in the fundraiser. "I work with children. I've worked with children my whole adult life and I always feel like there is just something very magical, whether you celebrate Christmas or not. There's just something very magical about this time of year," Magalio said. "With children receiving a gift whether it be for Christmas or for Hanukkah, any kind of holiday tradition. It's just something that brings back happy memories for me, my peers, and I know a lot of my students. It's just something I want to do."

If you were unable to donate a toy through these organizations, "Toys for Tots" is still being run by other organizations and companies in the area, such as the Raritan Valley Community College and Toys R Us, according to Lomax. It doesn't matter who the toys are donated through, they're all going to the same place.

"We like to see the excitement within children on Christmas day; I think it's more of a sense and a feeling of 'it's their new toy,'" said Vollrath.

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Students give back to Hunterdon County



Photo courtesy of studentboost.org

Senior Alexis Bruccoleri helps one of the children in the Student Boost program with homework.

Student Boost: a successful student organized non-profit

Continued from page one

Through family friends, Bruccoleri found a teacher involved with the Grove Street Program, which helped children in underprivileged schools improve in NJASK skill areas.

Bruccoleri became interested in the work of this organization and was eager to help. She recruited several of her friends, and quickly the Central students developed a network of volunteer workers who instantly connected with the children they reached out to.

Although Student Boost has visited other schools, its primary outreach is Grove Street Elementary School in Irvington, New Jersey. Every Saturday, members visit Irvington and tutor students from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Senior Julianne Ferraro,

another participant in Student Boost, loves the personalized aspect of volunteering with this program. "It's a fun experience, the kids are all really excited to see you. They remember your name. It's so special," she said.

According to Bruccoleri, the best experience she has gained from the organization is the connections made with students in need, interacting with teachers, and becoming a personal hero to the children they meet.

"I can remember tutoring a second grade girl who really needed a lot of help," Bruccoleri recalled. "When we left she chased after me and grabbed onto my legs and asked if I was going to come back soon. The kids really expect us to return and keep helping them. We've become role models for them."

For these reasons, Bruccoleri aspires to stay involved with Student Boost even after she graduates in June.

She continues to recruit new members to perpetuate the organization and maintains a website, www.studentboost.org, where you can find out more about initiatives, how to get involved, and view photos of the volunteers in action.

"A lot of students go into volunteer work for college purposes and there's a lot of pressure to do that, but when it's over it's so rewarding," said Bruccoleri. "Some parents in Irvington are indifferent about their kids' schooling, and here that's nonexistent. There is nothing bad about giving back to your community. If you are able to do it you definitely should."

SAFE in Hunterdon



Photo courtesy of Jessica Cavallaro

Junior Tyler Sarno and sophomores Abby Campbell (left), Olivia Mahieu, and Casey Cavallaro (right) color for the kids at the transitional house.

By Tyler Sarno

Hunterdon County has the highest number of reported domestic violence cases in New Jersey. This does not equate to having the most abuse in the state, but the willingness of victims to report their situation is likely due to the comprehensive support system available in this county.

SAFE in Hunterdon, a domestic violence agency located on East Main Street in Flemington, offers sympathy, understanding, and open arms. Each individual working at SAFE makes it personal—some even understanding first hand what these victims have been through. Between January and September 2013, SAFE has received 722 phone calls to their 24-hour hotline and have personally served 146 victims of abuse.

I started to volunteer at the beginning of the summer and have learned so much since then. There is not much that can compare to what I've experienced while volunteering at SAFE.

Currently, five other high school students and I volunteer to work with two young children who witnessed domestic violence and are now under the protection of SAFE, something I could never imagine. I usually help them with their homework and play games with them. What is even more amazing is how happy and bright they are, despite everything they've been through. These two children, as young as they are, have shown strength beyond belief and in turn, I have been inspired by their bravery. They have made an impact on my life that I will carry with me forever. Just seeing their faces light up every time I get to see them is something in its own. It reminds me that I have helped make a difference in these children's lives, but at the same time, they have done the exact same for me.

These two children are not the only ones who have been with me during my experience at SAFE. I have met five simply amazing people throughout my time as well as one of the advocates that works

there. Memories that will last forever have been made with these people.

Another thing that makes my experience even better is that I've had the incredible opportunity to be with SAFE since the beginning of this project. It's not something that many people are able to become involved in and I cannot be more grateful.

The project I mentioned before is called Bloom. We're only in the planning stage, but it is something that I am really looking forward to. Bloom's main focus is on the awareness and education about safe dating, specifically for teens. It is similar to the Safe Date unit that sophomores have in P.E., but even more educational and hands-on, especially since it is taught by teenagers themselves. Bloom's overall goal is to raise awareness on dating violence and to educate teens on how to avoid being in an abusive relationship. This program has already been implemented in schools in Arizona and will hopefully be brought to ours and then spread throughout the country.

The best part about that is that, along with the other five volunteers, I get to come up with new ideas to improve the lives of people who are victims of domestic violence and raise awareness. Even though domestic violence awareness month was in October, there are still many ways to show your support for the cause.

SAFE does a variety of things to raise money, as well as awareness, for domestic violence. Some of the events include a softball fundraiser, the Candlelight Vigil, and my personal favorite, the Men-in-Heels Relay.

I think that there is nothing better than inspiring someone else to join the cause. Volunteering at SAFE has given me something to work towards that is bigger than myself and there is nothing else in my life that can compare to what I've experienced. I hope to take this with me far beyond high school, and it is something that I know I will never forget.



Photo courtesy of Herald Post

SAFE provided 417 children with a service such as counseling, education support, child care/recreation, and/or adjunctive therapy between January and September 2013.

Hunters Helping the Hungry

By Justin Bean

There is no denying that hunger is a serious problem in the United States. In New Jersey alone, 11.5% of the population experiences food hardship every year, which is just over 1 million people. Most of those people rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, better known as SNAP, or food stamps in order to pay for food for their families. Others go to soup kitchens or other food distributing agencies for help.

Oftentimes these agencies use products which fall off the shelves at supermarkets or have recently expired. While they are examined to ensure that they are edible, they don't always have the best nutritional value. That is where a rather unexpected demographic has stepped into help—deer hunters.

Hunters Helping the Hungry, or HHH, is a non-profit organization that was established in 1997 to allow hunters to donate whitetail deer they harvest during season in an effort to provide food to hungry citizens of New Jersey. HHH coordinates the efforts of hunters, butchers, and food banks in order to ensure that the deer can be processed by butchers and then donated to food banks at no cost to the food banks.

HHH also raises funds to en-

sure that the processing fee that the hunters have to pay will be kept low. This ensures that even hunters who aren't economically fortunate can still help in the fight against hunger. All butchers that help process venison—deer meat—by any of these groups need to be inspected by the State Health Department to ensure that the venison is safe to eat.



Photo courtesy of Don Bean

Junior Justin Bean receives an award for fifth place in the sporting clay.

I had the distinct pleasure of attending one of HHH's biannual sporting days outings at Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays in Coplay,

Pa. A sporting clay is a type of competitive shooting event which can most easily be compared to golf in its layout. Each shooter shoots one course which has between eight and 20 stations on it, for a total of 100 clay targets. In the end, whoever hits the most clay targets wins.

At the sporting clay, the group was able to raise almost \$15,000 in donations and entrance fees. The money raised will work to reduce the cost of processing the donated venison. This sporting clay outing also celebrated the second anniversary of the foundation passing a milestone of 1 million venison meals that were served to the hungry in New Jersey since the program was founded.

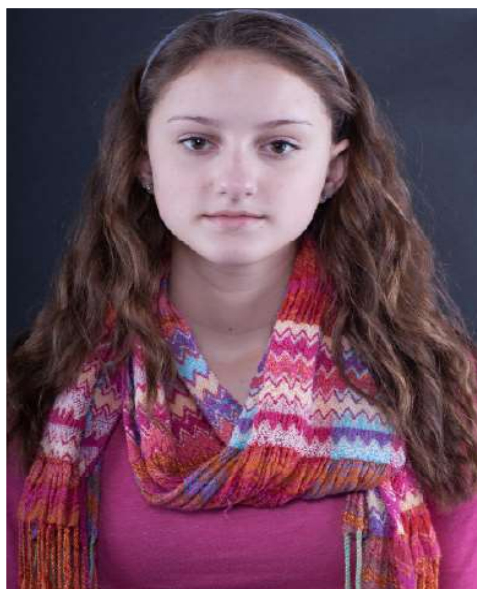
Despite all of the good which HHH has done and continues to do for New Jersey, it has come under fire. Mark Charbonneau, one of the trustees and my longtime friend, receives a lot of hatred from those who disagree with what HHH does. "I get letters in the mail from people who call me a Bambi killer and a monster, and they ask how I can sleep at night knowing that I support the killing of animals across the state," he said. "Here is my response; we have given one million meals to hungry people in New Jersey, what have you done to help your community?"

HC-ing double: a closer look at

Reflecting on the pros and cons of life as a sibling duo



Diane Wagner



Abbie Rizzo



Joe Mania



Photo courtesy of Jake Mania

The Mania twins enjoy their eighth grade dinner dance with their Readington Middle School class.

By Angelisa Cuniff

Having a built-in best friend, a joint birthday, and someone who looks just like you are some of the perks twins experience on a daily basis. But not everyone has a fair shot at having a “Suite Life of Zack and Cody” kind of childhood. As of 2013, merely 32 out of 1000 births will be fraternal or identical twins: only about 3 percent.

Of course, that means Central, with about 800 students per class, has the statistical advantage when it comes to its twin population.

For most twins, having a counterpart has been a majorly important part of their life, in more ways than one. Juniors Allie and Abbie Rizzo are identical twins. Abbie Rizzo explained why she enjoys being a twin so much. “I honestly love being a twin because I always have someone there no matter what,” explained Abbie Rizzo, the younger of the two.

Allie Rizzo agreed. “Being a twin has a lot of ups and down but I love being one.” She also thinks that having a twin has taught her tolerance. “Being a twin has also positively impacted my life, and I think it has taught us to accept things, like being asked the same questions all time and getting called the wrong name,” she said.

Even though getting grouped together has its inconveniences, most of the twins do agree that it can be funny when people realize there’s two of the same-looking person, or an accidental mix-up occurs.

Junior Joe Mania says that he was confused by others with his fraternal brother, Jake, as early as preschool. “I think one of the funniest stories of being a twin was in preschool where I was out sick and the teacher did not notice I was out,” he said. “She just treated my brother like both me and my brother and at the end of the day when it was time to pick up my brother, my teacher realized what she was doing.”

Allie and Abbie Rizzo had a different experience: they made up their own “twin” language when they were babies. “There’s actually video of us when we were babies, we were talking to each other in, what my parents call, our own made up language. Apparently we would have actual conversations with each other,” said Allie Rizzo.

Allie Rizzo also recalls a story from their childhood. “There’s a video where, as babies, we crawled into the same room from different doors and when we saw each other, we started laughing so hard. When I watched it I couldn’t stop laughing either,” said Allie Rizzo.

Being in the same grade and looking alike often lead to having similar friends as well. Jake and Joe Mania both agree that one of the best parts of being a twin is the impact it has on your social life, like having the same group of friends, for example.

However, this can sometimes be a double-edged sword. “Since we have the same group of friends, we argue about going somewhere with friends without each other,” Jake Mania said.

Unfortunately social life is not the only aspect that is negatively affected by being a twin. Even though twins are two separate people, they often end up automatically being grouped together in everything, but not by their own choice.

For instance, being mistaken all the time for someone else can bother some twins, such as juniors Julia and Diane Wagner. “The worst part is that people may not understand that twins are not completely the same person,” said Diane Wagner.

Joe Mania shares a similar view. “There are some downsides. Everyone refers to you as ‘the twins,’ mixes up names and gives the excuse ‘you look so similar,’ and always group you together,” he said.

Another drawback of being a twin is the competitiveness that can result from always being together. Fighting for grades

and friends can have a negative impact on twins’ relationships.

Allie Rizzo says that the competitiveness she experiences with her sister can be negative at times. “We’re competitive with each other. For example, If she is better at something than me I would get really upset rather than if it was just one of my friends that was better than me,” she said.

“There is a lot of competition between us and to be honest, it sucks. Another thing is that we don’t have the chance to have our own friends so we literally end up going everywhere with each other,” she said.

Abbie Rizzo thinks that the least enjoyable part of being a twin is the rivalry. “The worst part is probably that we are always so competitive, but we still love each other and support each other,” she said.

“The worst part is probably that we are always so competitive, but we still love each other and support each other.”

-Allie Rizzo, junior

However, being together all the time helps twins value whatever alone time they do get as individuals, but time apart forces them to stop relying on each other.

Allie Rizzo values the time when she and her sister can pursue their individual interests. “We are together all the time and because of this, we really value the time when we’re doing different activities than each other; there’s barely times where we don’t see each other,” said Rizzo. “Because of this, we also value the time when we are treated like individuals rather than twins.”

Julia Wagner thinks that as she’s gotten older she and her sister have become more independent. “We used to take a lot of the same classes and have the same teachers when we were in middle school. But now we don’t rely on each other as much,” said Julia.

Diane thinks that while many aspects of their lives are similar they can be individuals too. “I don’t believe that we are forced to like the same things and be involved in the same things,” she said.

Growing up with a constant companion is routine for the twins; however, as they grow up and experience things independent of one another they realize their true identities. “Although we may wear the same clothes and do the same sports those are not the only things that define a person,” said Joe Mania.

With all of that, Abbie Rizzo wishes she could know what it was like not to have a twin. “No, I don’t think I would [choose to be a twin]. Although I really like being a twin if given the opportunity I would want to try not being one so I could have the experience,” she said.

Diane Wagner wouldn’t give it up. “I would choose to be a twin because you always have someone who understands you really well and is always there to talk,” she said.

“Being twins is great because we form friendships faster and we never experience loneliness,” said Jake Mania.

Twins share a lot of things: friends, birthdays, and in some cases, the same face. But that isn’t always a positive thing.

Luckily for these twins, it is. Being a twin can be a rollercoaster, but one thing remains clear: these twins have always had each other, and they always will.



Julia Wagner



Allie Rizzo



Jake Mania

Photos by Trent Levitt



Photo courtesy of Abbie Rizzo

The Rizzo girls pose for a photo before Hunterdon Central’s homecoming dance.

life as a Central twin or triplet

A tale of triplets — highlighting the Hylands

By Alexis Morillo

At first glance, senior Katie Hyland seems like any other Red Devil. She plays sports and she takes challenging classes. But there is something unique about Katie: she is a triplet. Katie and her siblings, Julie and Dan are practically experts on each other after growing up in each other's constant company. We discussed with Katie to get a better insight on the typical life of a triplet.

Q: What was it like growing up as triplets?

A: I suppose not that much different from growing up as anything else. I mean not that I would know, it's all I've really known. I guess it is just like having any other sibling, except you'd have classes with them and experience things at around the same time.

Q: Do any of you have to share a room or bathroom?

A: I share a bedroom with my two sisters, and all five of us share a bathroom. I guess I've just kind of grown up accustomed to not having much privacy or space for my things.

Q: What is the biggest/strangest fight you have gotten into with each other?

A: I don't know. There's so many. A lot of times Julie and Dan argue, and I'm stuck in the middle of it. I'd like to say that I try to mediate, but that isn't really true. Mostly I go away and try to ignore them.



Photo courtesy of Katie Hyland
In 1996, the Hyland triplets dressed up as matching cows for Halloween (left to right: Dan, Julie, and Katie Hyland).

Q: Do you all participate in similar activities in school/take similar classes?

A: Outside of school, we all mostly do different things. We do take a lot of the same classes though. It's not unusual that two of us might have a class together or the same teacher at the same time. One time our freshman year all three of us were in the same history class.

Q: What do you think is the hardest part about being a triplet?

A: Honestly I think it's a lot harder for our parents than it is for us. They're the ones who had to deal with driving all of us around for years wherever we needed to be.

I know back-to-school nights are a hassle. Our parents end up going to the days schedule for both ends of the alphabet and they'll make a game plan figuring out who'll go to what teacher. College applications turn into a bit of a mess also.

Q: And the most fun part of being a triplet?

A: I think it's cool knowing there's two other people around who you're really close to. It's rare that I ever get bored at home. And at school, it's great running into them, messing with them in front of teachers or friends who may not know all of us. We play jokes on each other, and together we like to play jokes on our

parents. We're a team.

Q: Do you all drive to school together/share a car?

A: We actually have three cars, however we have only two parking spots.

Q: What is your favorite childhood memory together?

A: I remember when we were in middle school we had this dog of ours that was very old and he was starting to look very miserable, like he was getting ready to die. Our parents decided that we would take him to the vet to be put to sleep. Of course we were all very upset, so the night before, all three of us spent the night on the living room

floor with our dog, to let him know that he was loved and that we cared about him. The next morning, he was perkier and happier than he had been in weeks, and so we decided that if he wanted to stay then we weren't going to stop him.

Q: Is it hard for people to tell you apart?

A: Not at all. I think it's harder for people to realize that we're all related. Though they do always say we have the same eyes after they figure it out.

Q: Do you think you have "triplet telepathy"?

A: Unfortunately not.

Q: Do you all hang out with one group of friends, or do your friends vary?

A: I'd say that we each kind of run in different crowds, however it's not like we don't know our siblings' friends. It's more like we each have our own group but sometimes we like to wander on over to each other's groups. If anything I'd say being a triplet helps you to become familiar with a lot more people than you would otherwise.

Q: How are your personalities different?

A: I know I'm the nerd of the family. The others like to make fun of me for studying all the time. However they're all really smart and do well in school. In general we're all quiet sort of people. Dan can be pretty zany at times and Julie's a lot more organized than either of us. I can, however, say that we watch a lot of

A day in the life of Anthony Amato, a teenage triplet

By Anthony Amato

My alarm buzzes and I look over to view a "6:00" on the LCD screen. Like every other day, I roll over onto the cold floor and crawl to the nearest bathroom for a quick post-hibernation shower. Like most days, the bathroom door is barricaded shut by my sister, Danuta, as she has the location-al advantage. I would try the other bathroom but I know like every other day, my brother, Darek, will have already beaten me to the punch. This is the cold reality of being a triplet.

In short, being a triplet centers ironically around three things or actually a lack of those things. These things would be:

- 1.) lack of space that a poor soul uncovers at six in the morning when there isn't a usable bathroom
- 2.) the lack of funds which can't be allocated by the family for things such as clothes, cars and college
- 3.) the perceived lack of food which drives us each crazy and makes any nice family dinner erupt into a bloodbath.

Even though our family does well enough to support us, it does at times feel like being a triplet hampers our individuality.

We share almost everything: rooms, towels, computers and, of course, birthdays. Although, rather recently, we found a resolution to the birthday issue by each of us receiving personal cakes, an idea which saw its genesis after a certain one of us sunk our head into the shared birthday cake for a room brimming with seven year olds. However, the issue of driving licenses has come up.

As we each were able to pass our road tests, we have sparked the age old debate of transportation and auto-logistics. Being a triplet, the best way to avoid the problem of not having a car to ourselves is not having a car altogether. This solution has managed to quell dissent rather well so far but like communism, transcendentalism and '90s pop music, all "good things" must come to an end. For us, the conclusion to our conundrum is still as unknown as 95 percent of the ocean.

Other unresolved situations in our house include our planning our schedules around each other, as well as coming to a consensus on what we're eating for any meal. One might imagine a house with so many people would have a fairly good selection of food. One with the same logic might also be able to prove lines are not straight and that George Washington never existed. In our house, edible substances are always present, but the alchemy which can transform them into food is not. Our freezer is full of either frozen meat or century-old Eggo waffles, neither of which a sane person would willingly put into their mouth. For these reasons we have evolved to the point of photosynthesizing or, more realistically, eating whatever we can whenever it's available. Yes, as one might imagine this has demeaning psychological effects on all of us which may on occasion spoil those previously mentioned family dinners.

Even though being a triplet is most easily summed up by the lack of things, there are many aspects of our lives that are most definitely not lacking. There is always activity, noise, and things happening. There is always someone to talk to or help you out. Being a triplet is more than having two other people sharing your lives and resources, it is having two other people there to share your experiences, dreams, hopes and doubts. And to most likely make fun of you for them.

Anthony

Darek

Danuta

To Do:

- ☐ Beat my siblings to the bathroom
- ☐ Bake 3 birthday cakes
- ☐ Pass driving test

Photos courtesy of Anthony Amato, Danuta Amato, and Darek Amato

Students comment on brand new YouTube layout

By Megan Dodge
(Originally published in the Lamp Online)

Earlier last month, YouTube enacted a new policy: in order to comment on a video, one's YouTube account must be under a Google+ account. No Google+ account, no comment, plain and simple. A seemingly harmless enough business move intended to create conversations about the videos (rather than the usual crass, barely literate bickering that occurred previously) was met with a monstrous backlash.

And public opinion is clear: YouTubers are furious. An online petition has over 100,000 signatures to revert the commenting system back to its original state. More than 420,000 people have voiced their disapproval on the Reddit Google feed and even YouTube's cofounder has taken a stand against the new system.

It is only a matter of time until Google realizes the error of its ways and gives the YouTubers what they want. Or will Google simply ride this wave to failure?

I, contrary to what appears to be popular opinion, do not care whatsoever about the Google+ commenting dispute. A while back, YouTube offered me the option to change over to Google+ on my account, so I did. And guess what? Nothing changed for the worse. I was still able to comment and keep my username. And the Earth did not implode. I know, it's shocking that I can remain so unwaveringly calm in such a crisis, but the way I see it, it's really not a crisis.

The reason these YouTubers are so worked up over the change is because the new policy forces them to create a Google+ account with their actual identity linked to it, so their precious creeper anonymity is scourged. Why is anonymity so valued in the YouTube commenter community? It makes me wonder: what kind of scary person is on the other side of the comment, afraid to reveal his or her identity? I shudder at the thought.

If these enraged YouTubers resolve to not give in to the Google+ threat, they cannot comment this new installment will keep those 420,000 from soiling the comment section with inane arguments and vulgarity, so I say 'good riddance' to anonymity and a hearty 'thank you' to Google.

Not only will this weed out all the troublemakers who use YouTube comments as an outlet for their politically incorrect rants, insensitive rhetoric, and irrational hatred of the world—but most-liked comments and comments from famous YouTubers will be at the top for easier viewing. I appreciate this because now, the comments I want to see most will not be buried amongst pages and pages of random word vomit.

“This new installment will keep those 420,000 [YouTubers] from soiling the comment section”

Of course, I am not in line with popular opinion. Let's face it, we have all seen the YouTube comment sections and their seemingly inherent crudeness, so the vast majority of comment frequenters are probably within that 420,000.

Therefore, it's possible that their prominently voiced dissatisfaction with the Google+ system may result in Google backing down and returning the comment section back to the familiar format.

It will be a sad day when the YouTube creepers have their way, but I suppose I can see the situation through their eyes. After all, the 5th Amendment of the Constitution protects the privacy of personal information, and since Google is an American Company, it has the obligation to uphold the anonymity of YouTube community.



Photo courtesy of staticlickr.com



Photo courtesy of Matt Swider

Console Wars: One 4 the Ages Xbox One can't compete, PS4 is the way to go

By Danny Pasquarelli

I've been a gamer ever since I touched a PlayStation 2 Controller back in 2001, and never have I been so conflicted as to which console I should purchase than I am here and now. In the past couple of years I have shifted from a Sony person, to a Microsoft, to a PC person and so on, but the recent release of the two next generation consoles has me scratching my head.

Both have very unique features, some bad, some good. I recently converted to being a Sony gamer, so I would choose the PS4 without a thought. However, the Xbox One is posing a threat to my Sony loyalty; the Xbox One is basically an entertainment system for everything ranging from TV, movies, games, and listening to music. On the other hand, the PS4 is 100 dollars less, comes with a more comfortable controller, and simply focuses more on pure gaming experience, something Microsoft appears to have lost track of.

To begin, the Xbox One is more focused on being everything in one rather than just being a game console. Some might see this to be excessive, especially if they don't care for these features, or already have a cable box, DVD player, etc.

Another problem with the Xbox One is the Kinect. The Kinect is a motion sensor that is included with every Xbox One, in other words, basically forced upon the consumer. It is used for various features like full body motion gameplay and voice

commands, which is all well and good, if you're the kind of person to use it, but the real problem lies in the price tag. In essence, the Kinect

adds \$100 to an already expensive console for a feature that many gamers, myself included, would probably never even use.

Some pros for the Xbox One are that you can switch between tasks like TV, games, movies, and Skype very quickly. You can also capture gameplay and edit the footage directly on the system, which is something never seen in a console before.

Even though I mentioned a lot of cons about the all in one focus of this console, there are some good things about it too. Frankly, the Xbox One simply has too many distractions for me to properly enjoy the games as developers intended them. Microsoft's submission to the console wars simply doesn't have horsepower to change my gaming allegiance, but it's worth noting that the Xbox One still has its fair share of advantages.

As previously mentioned, the PS4 focuses a lot more on gaming than Microsoft's new Xbox One. This can be a very good quality to a lot of gamers, considering most of them just care about the gaming aspect of the console. Another positive for the system is its pricing, \$400, which is \$100 less than its Xbox counterpart. That makes it a far more economical choice and could be the deciding factor for many gamers.

Despite my preference for the PS4, it's important to acknowledge that there are some downsides to the PS4. There are very strong limitations on listening to music

which, as I mentioned, is something the Xbox excels at. The PS4 doesn't allow users to listen to CDs or MP3s; but Sony is including a cloud based unlimited music subscription service. This addition, although enticing at first, has similar issues with that of Xbox's Kinect; most people probably will not use the subscription, considering there are many other, more convenient devices for listening to music and it irks people to pay for a feature that they would never use regardless. The PS3 allowed free online play, which was a huge upside to the console, but the PS4 will require an annual \$50 membership to do so. This may be a pitfall for many who preferred PlayStation for that reason in the past.

Ultimately, however, I have to go with the PS4. It's more gamer friendly and has a better line up of exclusives for the future; more importantly, it costs \$100 less than the Xbox One. I couldn't side with the Xbox One because it's a ripoff with the addition of the Kinect, which I would never use in the first place.

Furthermore, its all-in-one type focus which isn't conducive to my style of gameplay. Less frills means a greater focus on the pure gaming experience, a higher resolution, and so on. So all things considered, when I have enough money in the bank to be confident enough to withdraw \$400, I will be purchasing Sony's new PlayStation 4 console — not the Xbox One. Which side will you take?

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Deck the Halls



By Xining Gao

It's that time of year again: pull out the candy canes and wrapping paper, Santa Claus is coming to town. The buzz about Christmas had begun even before Thanksgiving, and at last, it is finally here. Christmas is not only a time for presents and parties, but also for holiday decorations, with families fully equipping their houses with millions of lights and giant inflatable snowmen.

Besides helping Santa Claus locate houses, is there a deeper reason to why people put out so many decorations? To many, putting up Christmas decorations is simply a means of ornamenting people's dwellings and displaying holiday cheer, but there is something very heartwarming and soothing in watching twinkling lights at nightfall.

For others, though, Christmas decorations aren't limited to a personal hobby. Chris Schaefer, owner of Schaefer's farm and

Central graduate from the class of '78, sets up his holiday lights every year for all of Hunterdon County to view. "I think this is our sixth year," he said. "[The lights] are in a tractor trailer truck with eight or nine guys, we stand them up, some by hand, some by crane. The first fifty we bought from another company, and the rest we built. My brother Bill made a virtual light show, it was his own design."

According to Schaefer, the lights at the farm are a serious undertaking, requiring nearly a month to set up. "We start as soon as haunted hayrides are over. The actors finish the show and help us set up. We still have all the people setting up to Thanksgiving morning, screwing in the last light bulbs."

After a long month of building, decorating, and lighting, Schaefer didn't have much to say about trimming the farm's many trees. "Mostly we're just so tired," he laughed.

To others, however, setting up Christmas decorations is a way for family to spend time together. For sophomore Eli Hernandez, decking out his house is an annual tradition. His family works together to put out lights, wreaths, and red bows around the house. They even take great care to embellish every tree with swirling strings of light. The final touch is the light-up reindeers that they set up on the lawn.

Even though Hernandez and his family go through massive efforts to set up such beautiful displays every year, Hernandez said they have more on their minds than just looks. "It's not the 'oohs' and the 'aahs' we get from our neighbors," he said, "but the precious moments that come from setting up the decorations that drive us to do it every year." Sometimes, it's fun to go all out with Christmas decorations, but it always goes back to family time.

Although Christmas decora-

tions can be very beautiful to see, not everybody can afford to devote so much time in setting them up. Sophomore Gwen Harvey agrees that for many years, it's been impossible to find the time to bring out the lights and hang them out. On the same note, though, Harvey also said, "Even without a whole bunch of decorations, we still celebrate the holidays all the same: together as a family." Christmas decorations or no Christmas decorations, Harvey, like many others, is still able to enjoy the holidays with her family.

While everyone has a different way of prepping and decorating for Christmas, one thing is always the same: the time and effort we put into our holidays is a way of bringing people together. Even if that might just be a couple calls around to gather cousins on Christmas morning, or a massive fifty-foot-tall inflatable Santa, that's just one family's way of sharing holiday cheer.

Photo courtesy of iPad Insight on Flickr

Find Your Match: Juniors and seniors present "The Matchmaker"

By Alex Carr

Looking for some classic entertainment to keep things jolly post-holidays? Look no further than the Little Theater at Hunterdon Central! On January 10 and 11, the 11/12 play "The Matchmaker" by Thornton Wilder will be taking the stage with an absolutely breathtaking set, wonderful cast, and a brilliant story to tell.

The tale follows the vibrant and popular matchmaker, Mrs. Dolly Levi, in her quest to unite and spark young, and sometimes old, love. Mrs. Levi's first quest is to set up a Yonkers store owner, Horace Vandergelder, with a mate of his own. At the same time, Horace is trying to stop his niece, Ermengarde, from marrying Ambrose Kemper. While their boss is out of town, two of Horace's store clerks, Cornelius Hackl and Barnaby Tucker, decide they want some adventure in their lives, and take a train to New York City, where they encounter love, adventure, and lots of trouble.

This year's audience is going to be in for quite an entertaining show, said senior Austin Palis. "There are genuine, thoughtful moments, and also outrageously wild and spastic ones as well," he said. "Barnaby Tucker, played by Zach Doimi, specializes in being close to



Photo by Helena Gan

Cornelius, Barnaby, Rudolph, and August get into a fight at a restaurant. Minnie Fary is chanting for Cornelius and Barnaby to take away the divide between the two tables, while August, their waiter, gets trapped in the divide.

the ground. Either he's tripping or falling or kneeling or laying down at just about every scene in the play, but that's not to say he's the only one who takes a dive at some point or another."

Not only will this be a great spectacle for the audience, but the actors will enjoy it too. Most of the cast are looking forward to pursuing their love for acting or performing and entering a field in theater. In the 11/12 play, all of the juniors and seniors have been in at least

one Central production before, so it's clear that the upperclassmen are beginning to let their love for theater shine through. The upcoming play will be a special moment for senior Phoebe Torsilieri. "I just love being on stage," she said about the acting process. "I love becoming someone else for an hour or two, and the rehearsal process is difficult but really important. You have to learn to develop your character so people will believe you."

For cast members such as Gun-

nar Rustay, being on stage is a magical experience, and provides an ecstatic feeling that nothing else may ever fulfill. "I love the way that it lets you be someone you're not and release emotions you otherwise would not have an outlet for," he said.

All in all, the show promises to be a very funny, witty, and entertaining one, promises junior Zach Doimi. "It's a classic story with a happy ending that everyone should know," he said. "Plus, we have all been working hard for months and we wish that you would spare just a few dollars to support our play, the Thespian Society and the arts in general."



Photo by Sonay Barazesh

"The Matchmaker" cast listens as play director Greg Bernet and student director Lauren Brandt (senior) give advice.

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Environmental Tips of the Week: Holiday Tips

By Delfina Picchio

- Bring your own bags on holiday shopping trips.
- Buy locally grown Christmas trees to save energy associated with transportation.
- Buy cards, envelopes, and wrapping paper made from recycled paper.
- Use old calendar pictures as cards. They're sturdy and beautiful.
- Decorate with LED lights. You can save up to 90% of energy!
- Wrap gifts using newspapers, paper bags, or recycled wrapping paper.
- Send holiday e-cards.
- Store leftovers in reusable containers.
- Shop at thrift shops.

How to Make a New Year's Resolution

By Tiffany Jiang

We've all had them, we've all said we were going to do it, but how many of us have actually succeeded in fulfilling our New Year's resolutions? Some of the most common goals people set for themselves are things like going to the gym, getting better grades, being a better person, and resolving not to make a New Year's resolution (although I don't see how that works, since you've failed the resolution by making it a resolution). But fear not; this article is all about the tips and tricks that'll help you create a New Year's resolution you can actually fulfill.

1. Make your resolution about something you really care about. With passion, anything is possible. For example, sophomore Eva Lin Feindt is very passionate about bacon. Last year, Feindt made it her top priority to eat more bacon. When asked about it this year, she proudly stated that she has succeeded in accomplishing this feat. Feindt has even gone above and beyond with her passion by indulging in bacon specially imported from Italy. Clearly, if it weren't for Feindt's dedication towards bacon, she would not have fulfilled her New Year's resolution.

2. Create an enjoyable plan to achieve your resolution. As students, the school struggle is real. Getting better grades is always difficult, but will become much easier with just a little motivation. Sophomore Olivia Durr has found a creative and fun solution to motivate herself to do her homework. "When I'm doing my history homework, or just reading something in general, sometimes it helps to put little bits of candy over the paragraphs I have to read. With every paragraph I read, I get to reward myself with the candy. It helps to not only keep me awake, but to make sure that I finish the homework." Durr's strategy makes her studying just slightly more endurable (and tasty), thus getting her closer towards getting those better grades.

3. Make the goal achievable. While most may be too reluctant to admit it, some people have dreams and aspirations that are too ambitious. Sophomore Joey Harkness might have an overly optimistic resolution, but that hasn't kept him from proudly pursuing it. "Well. My new year's resolution, every year, has been to get a horse made out of diamonds." Though this confidence is admirable, failing a New Year's resolution is always painful, so before officially setting your goal, make sure that you actually have a slight chance of fulfilling it.

After making sure that your New Years' resolutions fit under these three requirements, you are well on your way towards being successful with your goal. And with that, I wish you all luck, and a happy New Year!

Football team wins state championship

By Libby Harrington

Hunterdon Central went into the state final shooting for its sixth state title and its first since 2007. The team defeated previously undefeated and top-seeded Manalapan, 21-0, to win the NJSIAA Central Jersey, Group 5 championship at Rutgers University.

Senior Jason Cabinda led an offense that totaled 317 yards, including 186 yards and two touchdowns on the ground in 35 carries, while senior quarterback Mike Knight finished 8-of-15 for 182 yards.

Cabinda, at outside linebacker, led a defense that yielded a mere 75 total yards and six first downs. Cabinda had two of the five sacks recorded by Hunterdon Central, which had nine tackles for loss overall.

The game remained 6-0 courtesy of two field goals by senior kicker Stephen Barr in the first half. Barr was 2-for-3 on field goals in the first half, as he was wide left on a 38-yard attempt.

Then, with under 10 minutes left to play, Knight hit Ryan Dunleavy on a 65-yard pass to the Manlapan



Photo by Jackie Berardo

two yard line. Cabinda scored from

Manalapan had not been shut

there. Sealing the win with 3:55 left, Cabinda broke off a 39-yard run against a worn-down Manalapan defense.

In a stadium filled with fans who traveled far to watch the state final, the Red Devils delivered.

In bringing home the Group 5 sectional championship, the Red Devils football team proved and reinforced that they were a team that could make history.

out since 2009, a stretch of 52 straight games.

Hunterdon Central held Manalapan to 27 yards rushing, a team that entered that game averaging 301 yards per game on the ground.

Throughout the season the Central football team faced many setbacks and injuries. Bad luck turned a possible undefeated season into a dire situation when Knight suffered a broken leg during a home game.

The following weekend Cabinda suffered appendicitis, missing four games.

During its fight with injuries, the team went from an undefeated 5-0 record to losing starting quarterback Knight and running back Cabinda as well as two back-up quarterbacks and the back-up running back.

The results of these injuries showed as the team went on to lose four straight games. But se-

nior captains Knight and Cabinda proved to be remarkably fast healers as both returned to action at the start of the playoffs.

Despite losing four straight games leading up to the state playoffs, Cabinda and Knight came back stronger than ever.

The team raised its record to 7-0 when the two stars played a full game together.

In those seven games, the team out scored the opposition 229-28.

In three playoff games, Central outscored its opponents 87-7. Junior defensive end Shayne Comfort played a key role in the stifling defensive effort against Manalapan.

"It's one of the best feelings in the world to know that even through all the adversity we faced, we came together week in and week out and just kept working for our goal and it paid off," said Comfort, who had a sack.

It was a unit-wide effort by the defense as the line and linebackers stuffed the Manalapan running game and the secondary shut down the Braves' passing game.

Central fall sports teams win three sectional titles

By Sneha Choudhary

This year's fall sports teams will go down as some of the most successful teams in Hunterdon Central's history.

Our field hockey, boys soccer, and football teams won sectional

titles and girls volleyball reached the Group 4 semifinals, but we have achieved something even greater: pride in our school and appreciation of each other's talents.

Each team's combination of heart, drive, and talent took them further than most of us ever ex-

pected. For the first time in a long time, there was a tangible sense of spirit in the school and all of the students, athletes and nonathletes alike, supported each team.

As a whole, we were able to experience their jubilation when they won, and their heartache when

they lost.

Hunterdon Central was no longer divided into pieces and cliques and groups; we all began to come together as one cohesive unit in support of one another.

While it may all just be memories now, let us look back fondly on

how we were able to come together as a school when it mattered most, and let this school spirit carry on throughout this year and for years to come at Hunterdon Central.

Cheer team gets bid to nationals

Continued from page one

Sophomore Samantha Schnitzlein is hopeful that this year will be different. "Dunbar beat us last year because they hit a clean routine and we fell in one of our partner stunts," she said. "This year all our team wants to do is hit a clean routine and leave it all up to the judges. We want no regrets when we walk off the mat."

The strong-willed team is expecting to be unstoppable this year due to their relentless attitude. Danielle Patrick, a junior and back spot, thinks that the team's hard work and determination will pay off. "We need to work as hard as we can each time we step into practice," said Patrick. "Even if we are having a bad practice day we need to brush it off and come in with a fresh mindset the next day. Working together as a team in every aspect is what will lead us to become national champions."

Alexa Restaino, a junior and main base, also knows that they

have what it takes and she is confident in her team's abilities. She believes that the uniqueness of her team will allow them to go all the way.

"My team is unlike any other team I know because we are all so close and each other's best friends. We all share one common goal and I think that not many teams have that mentality," said Restaino. "We all want to win so badly that we will do anything and everything to get first. Being motivated and constantly reminding yourself what you're working for is the key to success and winning."

Be prepared to see many tour guides and Disney characters roaming the halls of Central the week before the girls leave as they psych themselves up for the national competition. And when you do spot one of these girls, be sure to wish her the best of luck. Central cheerleading is ready and psyched to win back the title they know they deserve.



Photo courtesy of Danielle Patrick

The cheerleading team psychs themselves up before stepping on the mat.

Player Profile: Holly Anderson commits to Marquette

Here's an inside look at junior Holly Anderson's decision to commit to Marquette University for lacrosse.

Q: Why do you want to play lacrosse in college?

A: It's something I've always grown up to know. There's never been a time I didn't want to play.

Q: Why did you choose Marquette?

A: I chose them because the coach went to Hunterdon Central. It felt good to know they wanted me. The connection for me was different from other schools that I visited.

Q: What are you most excited about?

A: Meeting my teammates and being on campus.

Q: What do you think helped you get to where you are and where you are going?

A: All of the coaches and my travel team Steps. The coach at Marquette knew me from Hunterdon Central and then recruited me through Steps.

Q: How long have you been playing lacrosse?

A: Since 2nd grade.

Q: What position will you be playing?

A: I would be playing defense but I will be trying out defensive mid once I get there.

Q: How long have you known you wanted to play lacrosse in college?

A: Since I was little. In 6th grade I really focused on my goal.

Q: What are your plans and/or goals for after college?

A: To stay in the Midwest and, depending on what my major is, find a job that I love.



Photo courtesy of Holly Anderson

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