



NORSE CODE

Volume 1 - Issue 2 - April 2017

# UNHEARD VOICES:

The reality  
of having  
anxiety as  
a teenager



# West Community Theatre



Music by Alan Menken  
Lyrics by Howard Ashman & Tim Rice  
Book by Linda Woolverton

July 14-23, 2017

For Fees, Auditions and Tickets, See

[www.nbexcellence.org/community/westpac.cfm](http://www.nbexcellence.org/community/westpac.cfm)



Book by James Lapine  
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Based on classic fairy tales

July 3-28 Workshop

July 28 Shows

**WEST**  
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER  
COMMUNITY THEATRE



[facebook.com/whatsinthebowl](https://facebook.com/whatsinthebowl)

@WhatsInMyPet

Ancestral Diets for Dogs & Cats  
100% Local and Family Owned & Operated  
15136 W National Ave  
(corner of National Ave & Coffee Rd)  
New Berlin, Wisconsin  
(262) 421-5333

You'll never guess what I just heard! The Norse Code is available online at [MyNorseCode.com](http://MyNorseCode.com)! You can find additional articles, photos and videos!

The Norse Code? Online, you say? Innnteresting.



## EAT WINGS. RAISE FUNDS.

On the day listed below, present this ticket to your server and Buffalo Wild Wings® will donate 10%\* of your total bill (not including tax, gratuity or promotional discounts) to our organization.

Buffalo Wild Wings strives to support our community and the organizations and sports teams within it. Together we can make a positive impact and help keep our community working and playing together.

(Show this ticket to your server on the date & time listed below.)

**NEW BERLIN WEST HIGH SCHOOL**

May 1, 2017 • 11:00 AM - 11:00 PM

15306 W Beloit Rd. • New Berlin, WI • 262-432-0100

\*The 10% donation is contingent on the organization raising at least \$300 of pre-tax sales during the promotion (subject to change in our discretion). Other restrictions may apply. Please see participating location for details. ©2015 Buffalo Wild Wings, Inc.

**BUFFALO  
WILD  
WINGS**



**ADMIT ONE**

# *In this issue...*

---



pg. 6-Dun-  
geons and  
Dragons  
Club



pg. 8-  
Unheard  
Voices:  
Anxiety



pg. 16- So-  
cial media  
affects self  
esteem

pg. 18-  
Basketball  
senior  
profiles



---

## *Also...*

Page 5- the importance of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich

Page 12- investigating club sports

Page 15- taking a gap year after high school



# From the editors

*Readers,*

This issue, despite being only our second this school year, is one of our most personal. We have several impactful stories featured in this issue, each of them written with care so as to accurately inform on topics such as anxiety and self esteem in teens. We proudly present our second issue with a cover story whose topic is constantly growing in both relevance and impact--anxiety in teens.

Throughout the magazine, you'll notice themes of teal and blue displayed to show our support for our fellow students who struggle with anxiety, as teal is the official color for anxiety awareness. From our readers, we ask only for the same respect and support to be shown for those in our NBW community who are battling anxiety.

We are overjoyed to have the opportunity in this issue to provide quality reporting on topics that students are passionate about. We sincerely hope you enjoy reading, from the meaningful investigation of teens' self-esteem right down to our fun feature on the importance of PB&J.

*Roxanne Panas and Abby Patterson  
Co-editors in chief*



## Norse Code staff

2016-2017

### CO-EDITORS IN CHIEF:

Abby Patterson  
Roxanne Panas

### NEWS EDITOR:

Jimmy Karolek

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### EDITOR:

Austin Graf

### OPINION/FEATURE EDITOR:

Alexis Dohm

### SPORTS EDITOR:

Katey Devine

### PHOTO/ONLINE EDITOR:

Sabrina French

### BUSINESS MANAGER:

Melissa Gruszczynski

### ADVISER:

Steve Altstadt

### STAFF WRITERS:

Amber Allan  
Alex Cannizzaro  
Ryan Dohm  
Wes Evans  
Teagan Gumina  
Grant Klusmann  
Katelyn Kugler  
Jenna Mirkes  
Jada Phelps  
Olivia Nyman

Reanna Peterson  
Payton Pruitt  
Riley Richards  
Asif Sameer  
Nathaniel Siegman  
Sara Tavernia  
Sammie VanWieringen  
Alaina Ward  
Alex Zerman





# Sandwich of forever

A peanut butter and jelly sandwich is much more than what meets the eye

**T**HE CLASSIC PEANUT butter and jelly sandwich. A favorite in every household for centuries. There once existed an America without peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Not just the country- but the continent, the planet, and for all we know, the galaxy and beyond. And that's a very sad state of affairs indeed.

People didn't know what they were missing. A century ago, humans roamed the earth unaware of the perfect pairing of peanut butter and jelly, a combination that would soon appease the palates of children and haunt chef's alike.

Surely bread had existed since time immemorable and across boundaries and intercontinental - and ground up nuts and cooked-down, sugared preserves as well. But it took some good old American gumption to form this most perfect union and turn it into a national sandwich obsession.

Save your wild-spore sourdough and artisanal Tuscan loaves for another sandwich; this is a job for pre sliced, bagged white bread. Creamy or crunchy peanut butter slapped on that bagged white bread, yum. Grape jelly delicately spread on the second piece of bread; you have to try and be

careful not to push down too hard so that the bread doesn't break.

Two of the utmost perfect combinations. Who could argue against it?

There's an infinite amount of combinations of PB&J to meet your specific taste. With spreads of crunchy peanut butter, all natural peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, fancy and expensive Whole Foods peanut butters, there's a never ending amount.

An even more variety of jellies will blow your mind. From classic grape and strawberry, there are some incredibly weird jelly's out there for all of you weirdos. For the more obscure taste buds perhaps a beer jelly, lavender jelly, chili bacon jam, onion jam or meat jam. Yes, meat jam.

Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches will forever be America's all time favorite. The bite into such a simple sandwich can take you back years into your childhood. Flashbacks of Mom's cheesy notes on a Post-it note in your lunch telling you how much she loves you. A single bite into an abstract sandwich will leave you wanting to call up your mom and thank her for creating you and your tastebuds.

*Jada Phelps, Staff Writer*

## Food for thought

the average American will eat 2,500 PBJs before graduating high school

two peanut farmers have been president: Thomas Jefferson and Jimmy Carter

national PB&J day is April 2nd

68% of people prefer creamy peanut butter instead of crunchy

96% of people put the peanut butter on



# Dungeons & Dragons club seeks adventurers

D & D, a popular game among many, has now found its place at New Berlin West

**D**UNGEONS AND DRAGONS IS A form of tabletop game based around role-playing and fantasy, with multiple different variants and story elements. The original, created by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson in 1974, was considered the father of all modern roleplaying games.

Usually a single dungeon master, essentially the 'referee' and storyteller, controls the game of multiple other players roleplaying as their characters. Nearly anything imaginable (and allowed by the dungeon master) can happen, but must first be decided by the roll of dice.

Although the game has been stereotyped into something that only 'nerds' and 'geeks' play, the game is always open to anyone, especially now that a dungeons

and dragons club is being started at New Berlin West.

What started as a couple of friends creating their first game, soon became a plethora of people all playing with a single dungeon master. It got to the point where the original members thought maybe it was time to begin sharing how to become a dungeon master, and teaching even more people to love dungeons and dragons as a whole.

Although the founders of D&D club were a little afraid that the club would not be approved by the school board, it didn't take long to find that they were now the owners of a new club based solely around something they all enjoyed. It started with Hunter Baker, Jimmy Karolek, Alex Zerman, Dan Bonin, who are now some of the leaders of the club.

The first meeting, held on February 27th, 2017, was attended by around 15 or so people, "which is right around what we [The group leaders] expected from hearing what friends and others said". The

meetings are now being held every monday after school, for around an hour, consisting of a couple different D&D activities. Being that it's still close to the beginning of







Image from Nerdist.com

the club, the meetings are still generally open to anyone willing to join, and are more about creating characters and learning how to play rather than experiencing actual games.

Hunter Baker, one of the founders, was very humble towards his influence on creating the club, and wants to stress the influence Jimmy Karolek and Alex Zerman had in being the creators. Baker is very enthusiastic about the club, encouraging people to join for the “safe, creative environment” offered and to be ready to “have fun and not worry about public ridicule”.

There was no lack of excitement in his voice as he described his ‘Bearkin’ race that he himself had designed specifically for the game. “It was so strange and fun creating a singing koala. I even mocked a dragon to death at one point”, he exclaimed

with a wide grin. It was quite evident that Baker enjoys the club exceptionally, and would love to see more people join, especially if they were willing to express themselves as much as he does himself.

Another leader to the group, Dan Bonin, was interviewed to get another perspective into the founders of D&D club. Originally gaining interest from a game called ‘Munchkin’, Bonin loves tabletop

RPG’s for how “fun and versatile” they are, and that they can lead “basically anywhere”. Although Bonin encourages those interested in D&D to join the club, it seems that both

Baker and Bonin would agree that anyone with a creative imagination and looking for a fun experience would fit in very well among the other members of D&D club.

**Riley Richards, Staff Writer**





# Struggling with anxiety:

What it's really like  
to have anxiety as a  
teenager

IN THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF teenagers there is often an overbearing amount of stress and anxiety in their lives. Every day teenagers may struggle with problems like stressing out over school work, handling a job, sports, or personal/family life. Everyone has their problems and stressors, and each is just as important as the next. Even the slightest of problems could turn out to be a great deal.

These burdens and the build-up of stressors can cause anxiety and does for mostly everyone. People have a general sense of anxiety that may be easy to deal with, but for others it's a different story.

While some people think of anxiety as an uneasy feeling in the pit of their stomach or the fear they feel when they stand atop a high building, severe anxiety symptoms can be much worse and even downright terrifying.

Symptoms of severe anxiety can create the feeling of a heart attack or even make



one feel like they're dying. Physical symptoms include heart palpitations, accelerated heart rate, sweating, trembling, shaking, shortness of breath, and feelings of being choked or smothered. Chest pains are sharp and nausea or abdominal distress causes some to vomit. Feelings of dizziness will make the person unsteady and lightheaded, sometimes causing them to faint.

Others can't always recognize that a person is dealing with these symptoms. When one has dealt with severe anxiety for a great deal of time, sometimes they will be able to hide it in public places, sitting silently and suffering without being noticed. While silently suffering, one will avoid others, be unusually quiet and keep to oneself.

Being in public places can be difficult for people with anxiety. Being surrounded by people may feel overwhelming and the endless amount of situations that could possibly happen runs through one's mind. In large groups or crowds, this feeling is like claustrophobia.

A person struggling with these symptoms as a result of severe anxiety will more often than not become detached from oneself and their environment.

Anxiety attacks, also known as panic attacks, are episodes of intense pain or fear. Anxiety attacks usually occur suddenly, without warning. Sometimes there's an obvious trigger--getting stuck in an elevator, for example, or thinking about the big speech you have to give--but in other cases, the attacks come out of the blue.

"I started having anxiety about two years ago. They started in class when I would be taking tests. Now, they're more generalized and [happen] whenever," commented Victoria Obst, a senior at New Berlin West.

Obst has Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) and panic disorder with panic attacks.

Anxiety attacks usually peak within ten minutes and rarely last more than thirty minutes. But, during that short time, the terror can be so severe that you feel as if you're about to die or totally lose control. The physical symptoms of anxiety attacks are so frightening that many people believe they're having a heart attack. After an anxiety attack is over, you may be worried about having another one, particularly in a public place where help isn't available or you can't escape easily.

Many may relate to these problems, but what really is the difference between normal stress and anxiety?

Anxiety is the body's natural response to danger, an automatic alarm that goes off when you feel threatened, under pressure, or are facing a stressful situation.

Anxiety isn't always a bad thing. In fact, anxiety can help one stay alert and focused, spur someone to action, and motivate to solve problems. But, when anxiety is constant or overwhelming, when it interferes with your relationships and activities, it stops being functional. That's when one has crossed the line from normal, productive anxiety into the territory of anxiety disorders.

There are six major types of anxiety disorders, each with their own distinct symptom profile: generalized anxiety disorder, anxiety attacks (panic disorder), obsessive-compulsive disorder, phobia, social anxiety disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

The most common anxiety disorders found in adolescents are generalized anxiety disorder, panic dis-

---

”

---

Since depression makes anxiety worse (and vice versa), it's important to seek treatment for both conditions.

---



*Photos by Jada Phelps*

order, and social anxiety.

If constant worries and fears distract someone from day-to-day activities, or one is troubled by a persistent feeling that something bad is going to happen, they may be suffering from generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). People with GAD are chronic worriers who feel anxious nearly all of the time, though they may not know why. Anxiety related to GAD often shows up as physical symptoms like insomnia, upset stomach, restlessness, and fatigue.

Obst comments, "I don't like being in hallways or the cafeteria...at concerts, I don't like when there aren't assigned seats. It feels like everyone's getting in my face."

A panic disorder is characterized by repetitive, unexpected panic attacks as well as the fear of experiencing another episode. A panic disorder may also be accompanied by agoraphobia, which is the fear of being in places where escape or help would be difficult to find in the event of a panic attack. If someone has agoraphobia, they're likely to avoid public places such as shopping malls or confined spaces such as an airplane.

If someone has a debilitating fear of being seen negatively by others and humiliated in public, they may have social anxiety disorder, also known as social phobia. Social anxiety disorder can be thought of as extreme shyness. In severe cases, social situations are avoid-

ed altogether. Performance anxiety (better known as stage fright) is the most common type of social phobia.

According to Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., Many people with anxiety disorders also suffer from depression at some point. Anxiety and depression are believed to stem from the same biological vulnerability, which may explain why they so often go hand-in-hand. Since depression makes anxiety worse (and vice versa), it's important to seek treatment for both conditions.

Obst has seen many different therapists and has been going to therapy for a few years. She has different medications that she takes daily to help ease her problems.

"My anxiety really affects my concentration. My teachers really understand, though, if I need to like leave class because my anxiety will get bad."

Not everyone who worries a lot has an anxiety disorder. Someone may be too anxious because of an overly demanding schedule, lack of exercise or sleep, or even from too much coffee.

The bottom line is that if one's lifestyle is unhealthy and stressful, they're more likely to feel anxious--whether or not they actually have an anxiety disorder.

One should make sure they're making time everyday for relaxation and fun. If distressed, get the emotional sup-

## Anxiety self-help tips

- **Connect with others.** Meet up with friends and build new relationships
- **Practice relaxation techniques.** When practiced regularly, relaxation techniques such as mindfulness meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, and deep breathing can reduce anxiety symptoms and increase feelings of relaxation and emotional well-being.
- **Exercise regularly.** Exercise is a natural stress-buster and anxiety-reliever. Exercising releases natural dopamine which can increase your mood and spirit.
- **Get enough sleep.** A lack of sleep can exacerbate anxious thoughts and feelings, so try to get seven to nine hours of quality sleep a night.
- **Train your brain to stay calm.** Worrying is a mental habit that you can learn to break. Strategies such as creating a worry period, challenging anxious thoughts, and learning to accept uncertainty can significantly reduce anxiety and fear.



port needed. Take care of one's body and don't overload with responsibilities. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.

If stress levels are through the roof, stress management can help. There may be responsibilities you can give up, turn down or delegate to others. If you're feeling isolated or unsupported, find someone you trust to confide in. Just talking about your worries can make them seem less frightening.

There are many ways one can cope with anxiety. Using small toys, fidgets, to keep the mind distracted is a common way adolescents help deal with anxiety. But fidgets don't always help everyone.

"I have a ball I fidget with and I play with things. I don't use fidgets as much but I organize a lot," says Obst.

Anything that you can do to distract your mind and focus on something other than your anxiety, is an excellent way to help yourself get through what you're struggling with.

After interviewing Obst and others at NBW (who would like to remain anonymous) who strug-

gle with anxiety and depression, collectively we came up with things you should and shouldn't say to someone who struggles with these problems.

In the midst of having horrible anxiety or a panic attack, say to that person "it's okay," "you're going to be okay," "everything's going to be alright." Say this in a calm and unoffensive voice. If you have the slightest raise in your voice or are making it seem that you're upset with the person for having anxiety; this will only make the anxiety worse. Be cautious with your actions, words, and tones.

In that matter, making comments such as "stop worrying about it," or "there's nothing to worry about," will make a person feel pathetic and guilty for having an issue that they can't necessarily control. Instead, listen, and be sensitive towards the person. Ask if he or she needs a hug or what you can do to help. Keep in mind, it's hard for people to openly say what they really need in that exact moment.

*Jada Phelps, Staff Writer*

## Instead of...

## Say...

"Get over it."

"Believe me, I know how you feel."

"That must suck."

"I'm here for you."

"I can't really understand what you're feeling, but I can offer my compassion."

"You can survive this."

# Club teams are taking

## *But are they good for*

THE DAYS OF GOING OUTSIDE TO PLAY a casual game of baseball at the park are over. Today, when young kids want to play baseball, or any sport for that matter, they have to join the sport, either in a local rec organization or, more likely, a club league. According to a series from The Dallas Morning News, club sports are starting kids younger than ever before.

"Some kids have been with club teams for longer than eight years by the time they are finishing up high school," states the News. "Many clubs have teams with 8-year-olds and some even younger." If a student hasn't played club, it's increasingly difficult to succeed in high school, as the majority of their teammates and opponents have that higher-level experience. Present-day sports are a full-time investment, not a hobby. And, it seems like as time goes on, club sports are getting more and more extreme.

Today, youth club sports are more intense than ever before, with practices nearly every day and games year-round. This all comes with tons of traveling, player fees, and other expenses. This does not necessarily mean club sports are a bad thing. There are many benefits for the kids too, like more practice for high school sports, learning sportsmanship and teamwork, and a more athletic and healthy youth.

The question is, though, do the pros outweigh the cons? Are club

sports so essential to a high school athlete's success that they're getting in the way? Club sports affect the lives of athletes of all ages, plus coaches and parents. With numerous diverse opinions on the idea, it's hard to tell if club sports are really beneficial, or if they're actually hurting the kids.

In the past, the main goal of club sports has been to prepare athletes for the competition at the high school level. But, today, high school sports are starting to be replaced by club sports with overlapping seasons. In an interview with

»

***"Club sports can have more intensity an athlete might desire with higher-level players like themselves."***

athleticbusiness.com, Director of Coach Education for the National Federation of State High School Associations Tim Flannery says, "The problem we have with club is when their season overlaps our season. Then it's a problem for the parents, the kids, and the programs."

Head NBW football coach Ben Chosseck also has noticed losing some athletes to club, although football does not have a club program. "Other sports club teams do impact football by hav-

ing fall seasons and athletes are encouraged to continue playing that sport in the fall instead of playing football," Chosseck said.

Freshman athlete Kat Burkhardt, however, is all for club sports despite any conflicts with high school sports. "I believe an athlete will get much more out of a club sport over high school due to the higher-level playing and coaches that can fit an athlete's needs," Burkhardt said. "Club sports can have more intensity an athlete might desire with higher-level players like themselves. Club sports will better prepare athletes for college sports if they desire to do so."

However, studies show that the majority of kids in youth sports chose to play for fun and to make new friends rather than to improve at the sport. The Athletic Footwear Association took a survey of 20,000 children and found that 65% chose to join a club sport primarily to spend more time with their friends, while only 20% claimed the reason was to improve their athletic ability. Young kids aren't necessarily looking ahead when choosing to play a sport, they may be playing for fun. But, today it's more complicated than that; they're starting club sports as young as six or seven. And, in many instances, this is not necessarily the athlete's decision.

Oftentimes, it's the parents of the young athletes who want their kids to get involved, in hopes of winning an athletic scholar-



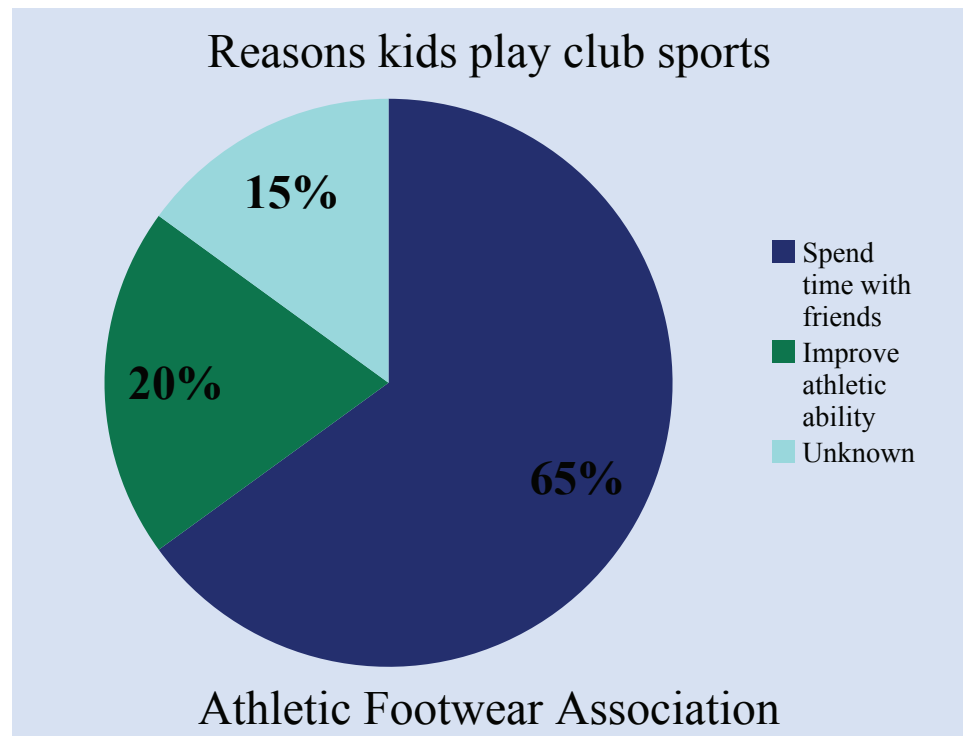
# ing over youth sports for student athletes?

ship in the future. While the kids might want to play for fun, parents might be serious about developing their children into dynamic athletes to draw the attention of college scouts as they get older. In an article on club sports from The Morning News, author Greg Riddle discusses youth sports being necessary for college play.

“Many coaches, both for high school and select teams, said that it has become a requisite to play club sports in order to land a Division I scholarship in a major team sport other than football,” Riddle says. “If an athlete wants to be seen by coaches from the biggest colleges, it often requires paying big money to play for a high-profile club team that travels across the nation.”

However, the odds of actually getting a scholarship are slim to none. According to CBS News, only roughly 2 percent of high school athletes across the country are awarded athletic scholarships in the NCAA, the National Collegiate Athletic Association. And, for that 2 percent, the average scholarship is worth \$11,000, just a portion of the total tuition. This proves that only the very best will even get the chance play in college, yet some continue to chase the money rather than letting kids simply enjoy themselves in the sport.

Along with the year-round investment of committing to a club sport comes injuries; specifically overuse injuries. Baseball, for ex-



ample, is a sport extremely prone to rotator cuff injuries. Throwing injuries are most common in baseball pitchers, yet can occur in a wide variety of sports with similar overhand motions, like volleyball or tennis.

According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, repeated throwing motions cause high stress on the area and can lead to a wide range of overuse injuries. “When one structure — such as the ligament system — becomes weakened due to repetitive stresses, other structures must handle the overload,” says the AAOS, “As a result, a wide range of shoulder injuries can occur in the throwing athlete.” Rotator cuff tears do not heal themselves

and the shoulder quickly becomes more painful and less effective, so athletes must be extra careful not to overuse their shoulders.

Despite their flaws, club sports do have many benefits and can be a great experience for kids. Whatever their age, club sports are meant to be enjoyable and fun for athletes, allowing them to develop strong bonds with their teammates and spend time with friends when traveling. Lessons of teamwork, sportsmanship, and leadership are all brought upon these young athletes, skills they can put to use all throughout their lives. Through sports, children can learn to be more independent while also learning to work with

others to accomplish a common goal.

In addition to getting more practice with a variety of coaches, Burkhardt says that there are other benefits of playing club. "...the different environment is good for an athlete, as they will never be playing with the same people for the rest of their life, so it's good to get out there and experience different athletes with different skill sets."

Ryan Heft, head coach of girls and boys swim, says many of his swimmers are on a club team in the off-season which better prepares them for the high school season. "Since the high school season is so short, swimmers who participate in a club sport can make much more progress and become a more competitive athlete in the sport," said Heft. For most athletes, if they're only practicing a few months a year during their high school season, they can get rusty in the off season, so club is great to keep up on practicing.

Heft also added that participating in multiple sports rather than choosing just one can be beneficial for athletes. "We also have many swimmers who compete in other sports at West, and I've found that being a multi-sport athlete has advantages that only participating in a club sport cannot offer," he says. "I've seen some athletes who only play one sport year-round overuse the same muscles, which has caused injuries, while the cross training that participating in multiple sports requires has allowed athletes to stay in shape, complete different types of exercises, and compete in each sport at a new level."

With this, kids today are often being forced to choose one sport to focus on at a young age. For example, consider an 8-year-old boy who loves soccer and is very good at it. He'd may be pressured into focusing on soccer and joining a club team at a higher level to practice year-round. However, this minimizes his opportunity to try out other sports he might be good at too, like baseball or football, because he was forced to choose one sport at a young age.

Multi-sport participation is extremely beneficial,

according to an article from the National Federation of State High School Associations. "Athletes can learn or enhance their hand-eye coordination, balance, endurance, explosion, communication, or athletic agility by participating in a variety of sports," author Mark Rerick writes. "Because the majority of our youth athletes can benefit greatly from multi-sport participation, it is important to create a department philosophy and culture that encourages our students to stay involved in activities."

The cost of today's sports is another huge factor in playing. According to the series from The Morning News, "72 percent of the high school coaches said they have had players either quit club sports or not play at all because of the cost," as reported by a recent Sports-

Day survey. In the same article, an assistant coaching director for the Excel Volleyball Club, Erin McClanahan, talks about the high prices of club volleyball in general. "I've heard there are people that have paid up to \$15,000 because they're traveling so much, the whole family is going, they're flying, they're staying in downtown hotels," McClanahan says.

All things considered, it's hard to tell if club sports are benefi-

cial for athletes or if they're just too much. While the time, money, and probability of burnout are high, the amount of practice, exercise, and enjoyable experiences for today's youth can be great. To prevent burnout in young kids and let them do what they deem enjoyable, our society should be more aware of how hard these future athletes are being worked. And, as for injuries, kids need to rest their muscles in the off season to prevent long-term consequences from over-practicing.

We've seen many negative outcomes resulting from overdoing youth sports, but at the same time have seen an increase in kids exercising too. Altogether, parents, coaches, and athletes themselves need to be aware of both the risks and benefits when playing club sports as kids continue to participate in athletics.

**Alaina Ward, Staff Writer**



Logos from different club sports teams in the Milwaukee area.



# Why I'm taking a gap year, and you should too

WHEN PEOPLE ASK ME what I'm going to do after high school, they usually expect me to say something about the college I'm going to, list off a few courses of study, or describe a career. When I say that I'm taking a year off, most people are confused. The idea of taking a gap year is definitely growing, but it's still fairly unheard of in American society. However, many colleges and universities are actually recommending taking one--including Ivy Leagues such as Harvard and Princeton.

One myth that many people believe is that after you take a year off, you won't want to go back to school. In reality, most people who take a gap year come back with a refreshed mind and are excited to go into higher education. According to the American Gap Association, 90% of those who originally intended to go to college did attend when they returned. And I'm still spending my senior year like most people: applying to colleges and scholarships. When I choose what school I would like to enroll in, I will simply defer my admittance for a year. As long as a school allows that (which almost all of them do), anyone can take a gap year and still be committed to enrolling in higher education the following year.

One of the main reasons that people should take a gap year is for the experience. It will allow you to meet people and see places that you may never get the opportunity to otherwise. Working or volunteering during a gap year is also something that will impress many colleges and future employers; not only will you have actual experi-

ence that shows you are hard-working and reliable, but you will also develop skills such as communicating with a diverse group of people.

Additionally, taking a gap year prevents you from having academic burnout. By the time of your gap year, you'll have been in school for at least 12 years straight. Personally, I'm excited to go to college, but it's not something I want to jump into immediately. Whether you choose to stay at home or to travel, a gap year will refresh your mind before you go to college. This can allow for



Many colleges and universities are actually recommending taking [a gap year]--including Ivy Leagues such as Harvard and Princeton.

significant academic growth when you return to school. In fact, a study conducted by the Middlebury College (Middlebury, Vermont) shows that the average GPA for students at their school who had taken a gap year were consistently higher than those who had not.

Gap years are also surprisingly affordable. Working during a gap year is a great way to either save up money for college, or pay for other expenses during the year. If you

choose to travel like me, there are many free or low-cost programs available. Some popular ones including NSLI-Y (focused in language-learning) or CBYX (based in Germany). Many volunteer programs also offer low rates, which vary depending on how long you stay. Typically, a longer stay means a larger discount. And even simply being a student traveler gives you discounts all over the globe, from cultural hotspots to hotel to airfare.

Finally, I thoroughly believe that global citizenship is the greatest benefit for those who choose to travel during a gap year. Very few people have a deep understanding of a culture other than their own. But if you take the opportunity to travel during a gap year, then you have the opportunity to completely immerse yourself in another culture. This will help you to better understand your surroundings in our world that is becoming more and more culturally integrated, as well as be able to see beyond the facts and figures that represent it. One anonymous testimonial from the American Gap Association states that "My friends who haven't taken a gap year look around and see only college, classes, internships, resumes...I look around and see the entire world waiting for me."

The decision to take a gap year is a big one, and it can seem a bit intimidating at first. But as I hope you will realize, taking that step is an amazing once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. College, work, the military--it'll all be waiting for you when you get back. So go grab a camera, a suitcase, and your bucket list; now it's time to step out into the world.

**Olivia Nyman, Staff Writer**

# The impact of social media

*"It could be the littlest things...looking at pictures...and you're like, 'I wish I was like that.'"*



**L**OOKING IN THE MIRROR AND NOT LIKING what they see and picking out every flaw and insecurity is a common occurrence that teens experience. Comments about weight and shape, putting children on a diet, and teasing all have a negative impact on a teen's self esteem, but what seems to be the most prevalent is social media.

Although social media seems like a perfect place to coexist with one's peers and catch up on everything that is happening, it can actually damage a child/teen's confidence. Without a lot of likes, follows, or retweets teens view themselves as not good enough.

Dina Borzekowski, professor at the Johns Hopkins School Of Public Health, says, "Social media may have a stronger impact on children's body image than traditional media. Messages and images are more targeted: if the message comes from a friend it is perceived as more meaningful and credible."

Not only do teens' peers have an influence on the way they perceive themselves; famous figures do as well. "I think [teens are self-conscious] because people are always judging each other, so then that

just builds into the insecurity," shared senior Ruwandi Wijenayake. "And, there's social media, and [there are] celebrities that post a lot of things and they have this great life and great bodies and people just want to be like that, and so if you're not like that you kinda feel insecure about yourself."

Social media is set up where you can only post what you want others to see. This allows people to be able to create a false representation of their lives, considering their followers or friends can only see the highs of their lives, not the lows. "I think it [social media] does cause some challenges in terms of people's perceptions of 'everybody else is out there doing these amazing things and having fun; I'm not involved in that,' but is that a really accurate representation?" says New Berlin West school psychologist Donna Douglas-Wagner. "Everything that is typically posted on instagram, social media, snapchat, are usually the highlights of your day or highlights of your weekend."

According to the West Virginia Department of Education, an average US woman is 5'4" and weighs 140 pounds while the average US model is 5'11" and weighs



# Media on teenagers' self-love

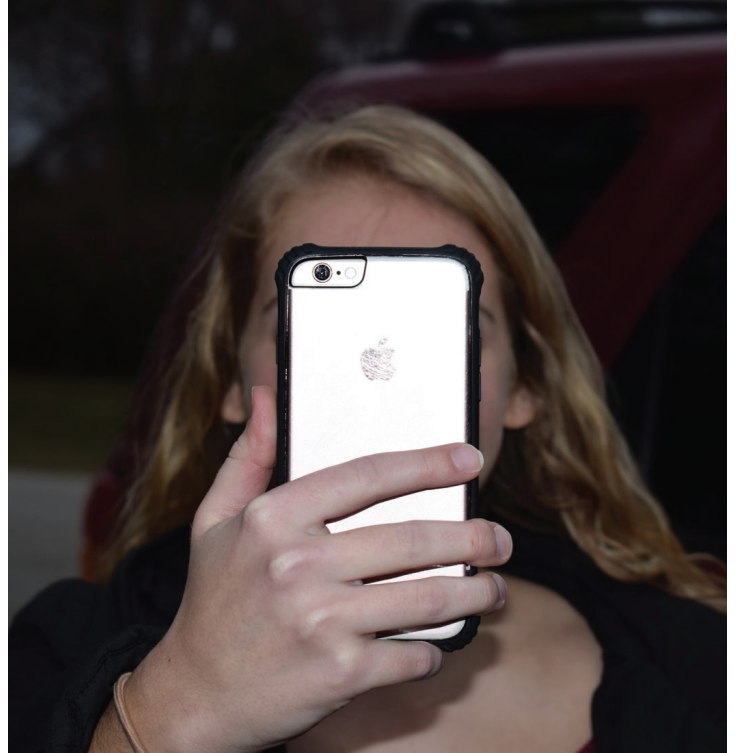


*87 out of 100 students surveyed at NBW wish they had someone else's life or appearance after seeing their photos on social media.*

117 pounds. In reality, someone who is the height of 5'11" should weigh between 136-172 pounds to be considered healthy. 87 out of 100 students surveyed at New Berlin West High School agreed that after seeing someone else's photo on social media, they wish they had that person's life or appearance. Teens see models online or in ads who are supposedly portraying the perfect body image, and then strive to become like skinny models, which can lead to serious complications.

While using social media, teens' risk for depression, self-harm, eating disorders, and anxiety goes up. According to the Park Nicollet Melrose Center, a residential eating disorder treatment center, found that 30-50% of their patients are actively using social-networking sites to support their eating disorders. An example of this would be a post saying, "For every like it equals one hour I will not eat."

Body image and appearance worries are spreading to younger children as well. According to the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, 69% of girls in 5th-12th grade reported that



Photos by Melissa Grusczyński

magazine pictures influenced their idea of a perfect body image. Children as young as ten years old are worrying if they are portraying society's "perfect" body image. A study that Duke University completed shows 40% of 9-10-year-olds have already been on a diet.

On social media, people are uploading every minute. When asked if social media has ever made her feel insecure, sophomore Kenna Petery said, "Definitely; just honestly, it could be the littlest things like looking at pictures and stuff and you're like, 'oh, I wish I was like that.'"

It is almost a natural instinct for teens to scroll through posts envying others, trying to copy others' looks to create the best version of themselves. Teens see someone who is supposedly skinnier or healthier-looking and immediately think that is the way a human is supposed to look. Singer Lorde recently shared unphotoshopped pictures of herself on Twitter to remind people that "flaws are okay," and media should not change the way a person perceives him or herself.

**Melissa Grusczyński, Staff Writer**



# Leaders on and off the

FROM THE MINUTE HIGH SCHOOL BEGINS, THE DAYS UNTIL SENIOR YEAR ARE already counting down in the back of every freshman's mind. Long awaited is the year of "lasts" while too often students take the present for granted. However, one thing that no one looks forward to is their last year in sports. With only a limited amount of games and seasons to be played, athletes dread the day it will be the last time playing on the court or field they have grown to love. For many, sports have been a major part of their life for 10 years, and the thought of it all ending can be bittersweet and overwhelming.



## #45 Matt Obradovich

**Years played:** 12

**Word of phrase to describe the team:** "What's another word for an old married couple?"

**What will be missed:** "I'm going to miss the feeling of being part of a family. I spend more time these guys than I do my own family at home pretty much since I'm always here, so when this is over, I'm not going to have these guys anymore."



## #23 Fred Cottrell

**Years played:** 13

**Advice to underclassmen:** "Just keep working, have fun with the game. And when it's your time, please step up and carry what it means to be a Viking."

**What will be missed:** "Definitely going to miss all the hype, the fans, and the games, and I don't know just the experience, and I was just glad to be a part of it."



## #34 Zach White

**Years played:** 13

**Favorite basketball memory:** "A couple weekends ago the varsity team went up to the Dells and got a win and went to the Pizza Ranch afterwards and had a pretty good time."

**The meaning of being a senior on the team:** "It means a lot. I enjoy leading the younger guys. It's an honor to lead the younger guys. These guys are great people."



## #15 Hunter Pipik

**Years played:** 12

**Reason they kept playing:** "I just love the game, the nature of competition. It keeps me coming back."

**The meaning of being a senior on the team:** "It means a lot. It's awesome. Being a captain means a lot, it means that my fellow teammates believe in me."

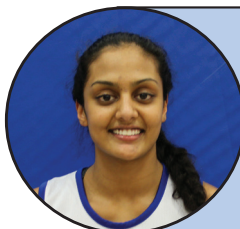
Described by head coach Brandon Mattox as "a strong group of young men," these seniors have increased the win total on the varsity level since they've been a part of the team. Forming close relationships with others in the program and laying a solid foundation for the underclassmen, their leadership will be greatly missed. "I'll miss their personalities and the passion they have for playing the game..." Mattox said. "It's been a privilege to coach them."

The boys finished their season 10-14, the team's best record since the 2011-2012 season.





# On the court: senior profiles



## #34 Ruwandi Wijenayake

Years played: 6

**The meaning of being a senior on the team:** "It's a big deal to me, especially because we're doing so well. I feel like all our seniors are so dedicated to the team, the whole team, we have such a good team altogether."

**What will be missed:** "These people, I love them. It's going to be crazy not seeing them everyday and every week. It's going to be hard."



## #23 Lily Adkison

Years played: 10

**Favorite basketball memory:** "We got stuck in the snow up in Stevens Point and we had to stay an extra night. It was just so cute. And we won the tournament. It was awesome."

**Advice to underclassmen:** "Stay committed. The payoff is so worth it. It's more than just basketball, it's the relationships you make. It does get way more fun."



## #3 Ewelina Schlomann

Years played: 12

**Reason they keep playing:** "Because I really love playing with the team and we have a nice team chemistry and having bonds with all the girls and winning a lot."

**What will be missed:** "The team and everyone on it. I'll miss the program in general and all the coaches and players and all the fans that support us."



## #13 Skylar Berens

Years played: 10

**The meaning of being a senior on the team:** "Honestly I didn't take a leadership role until this year so being a senior has really taught me how to lead a team. Senior year has taught me to keep pushing."

**Word or phrase to describe the team:** "Wolfpack."



## #11 Morgan Henrichs

Years played: 13

**Favorite basketball memory:** "Probably when I did my first behind the back pass, and Coach Berens was like 'MORGAN!' and then we made it, and he was like 'Good job. Good job.'"

**Word or phrase to describe the team:** "Goony. We're just straight goons. We all like having a good time but we're also pretty serious, so it's just fun."

As a group that has been playing together for years on end, these girls have nothing but chemistry with one another. "Their commitment to the program year in and

year out and their ability to compete" is something that will be missed by head coach Collin Thompson.

Thompson expressed that the need for leaders on the court increased with the loss of last year's seniors; however, this group stepped up and showed him that they could be those leaders. "They have fun while they're out there," said Thompson, "and they are showing the younger players how to play basketball, and how to compete day in and day out."

The girls finished as conference champions in the Woodland West and 20-4, the fewest amount of losses since the 2007-2008 season.

**Katey Devine, Sports Editor**





