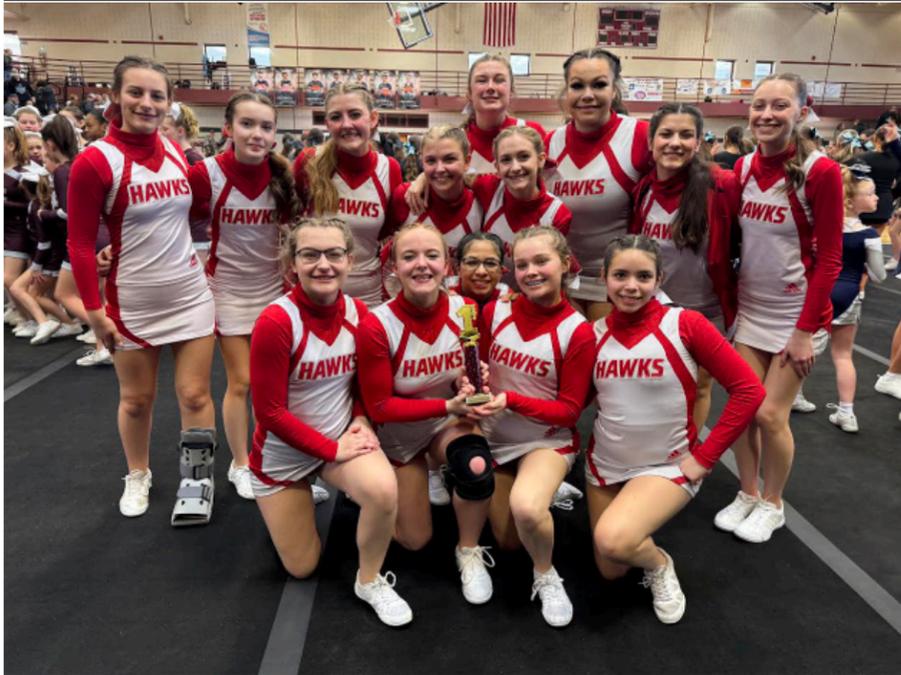


Hawk Happenings

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Cheerleaders prepare for competitions

Madeline Handwerk - 11

The Hamburg Area High School cheerleaders are preparing for the competition season as the winter season continues. The varsity cheer squad will attend three competitions this year, one in February and two in March. On February 22, the cheerleaders will take the mat at the State College Competition which will be held at State College High School. After that, they have two more competitions, one on the 16 of March at William Penn Senior High School, and the last one being on March 30 at the IN THE NET Sports Complex in Palmyra, Pennsylvania. The cheerleaders have been practicing and preparing for these competitions, and are hoping to bring home some wins!

Victoria Snyder, a freshman at Hamburg Area High School, is super excited for the competitions. She explains, "Preparing for competition has been difficult because I'm pressing my limits, but I enjoy cheering a lot." Out of all the competitions, she is looking forward to the State College one the most since her family is going to attend. She is planning on cheering again next year, and can not wait to see what the next few years will bring.

Peyton Snyder, one of the cheer captains, is a senior here at Hamburg Area High School. She has been cheering for 12 years. State College competition is the competition Peyton is excited for the most since there is always so much to see. This competition season, Peyton says that all the hard work the cheerleaders put into the routine pays off at competitions. Peyton reflects on her previous competition experiences and expresses, "My first competition during my freshman year I was so nervous to go out and perform, but then we got out there and did it and everything just worked out! We ended up having so much fun."

Art history students showcase final projects

Riley Mohn - 11

Art History, a fine arts class that only lasts one semester, is focused on teaching students how art changes over years and the impact of art over time. At the end of the course, students have to create a trifold project only covering one artist that they selected. These students then have to present these trifolds to students in the library.

Naomi Russell, a senior, covered the artist Stefano Da Verona. Naomi's favorite part of her project was the pictures of the art her artist created. After presenting a couple times, Naomi was able to walk around to her classmate's boards, and she listened in on Riley Mohn's presentation on Vincent Van Gogh. She was amazed to see the difference between all the artists students picked, and how some artists, like Stefano Da Verona chose to not show their face in their art. Naomi's advice to any future art history students is "have fun and make sure you study for the tests."

Kai Roesch, another senior, covered Eva Gonezales, a female impressionist. Kai's favorite part of her board was how the pastel background was not hard to make and still looked absolutely beautiful. The reason Kai chose Eva Gonezales as her artist was because only two female artists were truly covered in Art History, those being Artemisia Gentileschi and Judith Leyster. Kai was able to look around at three of her classmate's boards, which included Riley Mohn's board about Vincent Van Gogh, Alexandra Pabon's board about Jan Van Eyck, and Kaylum Riegel's board about Rene Magritte. Kai wished that they spent more time finalizing her board and adding the final touches to "make the board more fun" and that her presentation was "not fully finished," and she felt underprepared. Kai's advice for Art History students is "think over every decision in the simulation. It is a major, daily aspect of Art History, and it is better to think before you act."



Hamburg Area School District adds a police program

Tia Adam - 11

Since November 2024, both Hamburg High School and Middle School have had the chance to have a police officer on duty temporarily. Corporal Chase has been monitoring both schools throughout the day by going back and forth to each school daily. With him helping out at our schools, he and Dr. Gravish (have come up with the idea to create a School Resource Office Program.)

This program falls under a part of the Pennsylvania school safety codes. Under Section 1316-C, it requires that all schools must have one full-time police personnel who has completed state training during the school day. Schools were supposed to start this for the 2024-2025 school year, but for our school district, we were able to have a waiver for this year. The topic was also discussed at the January 13 board meeting which will hopefully mean that it will be in effect next year.

If approved, this program will be a way to improve the school environment by forming positive relationships. It will focus more on the idea of forming friendships and creating a positive environment with both the students and the police. The program will start by trying a no-punishment method to help the program grow. Corporal Chase will play a big role in this program because he is already familiar with school mentorships, counseling, finding resources, and solving problems. He can use his police training, previous experience, and knowledge of the law as a way to help in certain situations that are good, bad, and tricky. Along with that, he is also a good way for the school to be connected to the community, and to stay up to date with recent events.

Besides just being a police officer, Corporal Chase is also a father and a husband. He has a wife Sherry, and two kids, Lyla and Benny. Both of his kids participate in sports which amounts to nights filled of running around for activities. Besides just his wife and kids, he also has 2 dogs, a pitbull named Sofie and a Bully named Hank. When he gets the chance to watch movies or TV shows he tends to go for comedies, or his favorite movie, Joe Dirt. Another activity he does in his free time is work on cars and trucks, currently, he has 13 total vehicles that he fixes from time to time and then either races or shows them.

Overall if this program does get approved by the school board it will hopefully help make the school an even better environment than it already is.



Club spotlight: NHS

Hailey Quinn - 12

NHS stands for National Honor Society, which is a service organization for students who exemplify the traits of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. It is the highest honor that the faculty can confer upon a student.

While NHS is considered a club at Hamburg Area High School, not every student can sign up to join. Since it is an honor society, students who meet the grade requirements are invited to the society. After the applications are considered, new members are chosen and inducted at the induction ceremony held each year. Students who are accepted are inducted at the end of their junior year and are members through their senior year.

NHS is dedicated to helping the community and serving those around them. Members of the club complete service projects to demonstrate their dedication to giving back to the community.

These service projects include, trash clean-up at local parks, making blankets to donate to Safe Berks, donating handmade jewelry or suncatchers to local nursing homes or hospitals, donating to charities, making cookies or other thank you cards for the faculty and staff at the high school, and helping the PTOs of our elementary schools with their events.

Mrs. Bucheit has been the advisor of NHS for six years. She helps to run meetings, plan service projects, source materials, and provides any insight that students need. Her favorite part about being the advisor is working with a great bunch of students to serve our community. She notes, "Our service projects have a positive impact on the lives of others, and I am proud to be a part of that."

NHS President, Shelby Dougherty, plays an important role in the club. As president, she helps to run meetings, come up with ideas for service projects, and keep other members up to date on service opportunities. Her favorite part of being in NHS is having the ability to work creatively towards making our community better. She comments, "I am able to help come up with and execute community service projects that would not be possible without NHS."

Invitations to the juniors who have met the requirements to apply will be sent out the second week of February. They will then begin the application process that includes listing community service hours, extracurricular activities, and writing an essay, among other things. The induction ceremony for new members will be held on April 24.

While academics are what gets students the invitation, NHS is about much more than what students can do in a classroom. Shelby Dougherty notes, "Yes, our members are gifted academically, but they also apply themselves in the other pillars of NHS such as character, service, and leadership." Members of NHS care about giving back to the community and trying to make a difference. NHS provides them the opportunity to do something good for the community as high school students. Shelby Dougherty also recommends that new members run for an officer position. She notes, "It is extremely rewarding to not only participate in the service project, but to play a hand in planning them."

Additionally, being a member of National Honor Society looks great on college applications and can be helpful when applying for college honors programs or scholarships. Many of the NHS members are very involved in their community and are looking towards their futures. Being part of the National Honor Society can be a helpful tool towards success, not only in college applications, but in any aspect of a member's future. The skills, tools, and mentality that NHS provides are applicable in any situation and will provide members with the confidence they need to succeed.



Chem Guy experiments again

Riley Mohn - 11

Mr. Laughlin, Hamburg's main chemistry teacher, self-proclaims himself as 'Chem Guy'. Chem Guy is the teacher that runs Audio Technology, and he is one of the organizers of Java Jam.

The high school Mr. Laughlin graduated from was Blue Mountain. He got his undergrad at West Chester University for Chemistry in 1994, his master's at Wilkes-Barre University for Classroom Technology, a master's at LVC for STEM education, and he is currently getting his GIS certificate in West Chester; which allows him to officially teach about Geographical Information Systems. Originally, however, he went to West Chester for a music degree, and he ended up getting a science degree because of how many science classes he took.

Mr. Laughlin teaches both Honors and PS Chemistry, along with Geospatial Technology here at Hamburg. As Hamburg's chemistry teacher, Mr. Laughlin's favorite aspect of chemistry is physical chemistry, including quantum, electrons, and material chemistry. His favorite test he has the students do is the flame test where they test different elements over a bunsen burner, and they try and figure out what element it is by the color of the flame. He loves teaching the 3 mysteries that rock the science world, which incorporates music into physical chemistry. He also likes teaching physical chemistry related classes, too. He says "the students at Hamburg are awesome, that is what I enjoy most."

His hobbies are mainly playing rock and roll and recording music with his synthesizer. One joke he says all students should know according to Mr. Laughlin is "never trust an atom, they make up everything."



Senior BCTC student reflects on career

Hannah Kristiniak - 12

Current senior Caiden Kristiniak has been attending Berks Career and Technology Center since the beginning of his sophomore year. Originally, he applied for the welding program but was instead accepted into the auto collision program. Although he was initially disappointed because auto collision does not involve much welding, he has come to enjoy his time in the shop and has learned a lot.

The application process for BCTC was straightforward for Caiden, requiring only an essay explaining his interest in his desired program. As a sophomore, he focused on safety while working on cars. Over time, he developed skills in painting, washing, masking, prepping cars, and applying body filler. His passion for hands-on learning inspired him to pursue a trade rather than electives that did not align with his interests.

With the experience he has gained, Caiden is now prepared to enter the workforce immediately if he chooses. His training at BCTC helped him secure a job at Ernest Henry Auto Body in Shoemakersville, where he has worked since June 2024. Through the school's co-op program, he now works there every day except Mondays when he attends BCTC. He appreciates the co-op experience because it provides real-world training beyond the classroom.

Caiden encourages other students to take advantage of BCTC, describing it as a "great opportunity to learn what you like and dislikes are in a career." His involvement in the program has led to opportunities such as joining the National Technical Honor Society and SkillsUSA. He credits his BCTC teacher, Mr. Leinbach, for being extremely supportive throughout his journey.



Student Spotlight: Emily Horvath

Madeline Handwerk - 11

Emily Horvath is a freshman at Hamburg Area High School. While not in school, she enjoys cheering, playing Roblox, and hanging out with her friends. She adores Bruno Mars' music, and her favorite song he sings is "When I Was Your Man." Emily is addicted to a mobile game called Block Blast, similar to most teenagers. She and her cousin Maddie normally have a sleepover every weekend since they are so close.

Emily cheers for the Hamburg Hawks, specifically football, soccer, and basketball. She's been cheering for 11 years. While stunting, Emily is a flyer, which means she gets put in the air to do awesome stunts such as libs, fulls, and preps. "Cheering is my life. I love flying, and my teammates are so nice and give me confidence when stunting." Emily will continue cheering throughout the rest of her high school career.

Emily's grades are important to her. "My favorite class this year is integrated science with Mr. Meyers," says Emily. The reasoning behind that is that she finds it interesting and has many friends in that class to work with. Emily has really enjoyed her Freshman year so far, and looks forward to her next three years of high school before she goes off to college.



Students learn the history of Presidents' Day

Bethany Stuffle - 11

Presidents' Day is celebrated on the third Monday in February and was officially recognized as a federal holiday in 1879 to honor George Washington's Birthday. It then evolved into a holiday commemorating Abraham Lincoln, whose birthday falls in the same month. Eventually, it became a day to recognize all of the U.S. presidents. This change started with the Uniform Monday Holiday Act of 1971, which aimed to provide workers with more three-day weekends. Therefore, while the holiday is still officially called Washington's birthday at the federal level, it is now widely known as Presidents' Day and is celebrated with sales, educational events, and public ceremonies. This year's Presidents' Day fell on February 17 and allowed students of the Hamburg Area School District to also have off on Valentine's Day.

When asked if she knew what Presidents' Day was all about, junior Allie Houck said that Presidents' Day is a day to honor past presidents and what they did for the United States. While this is true, it still came as a shock to Allie that it began as a birthday celebration for George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

For more information about the history of Presidents' Day visit <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/presidents-day> or <https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/facts/the-truth-about-presidents-day>.



The track and field team participates in a Sunday meet

Lydia Fultz - 10

We all know the kind of work that may have to go into organizing events, and some more than others. This year the track and field team attempted to get involved in a Berks County showdown meet, hosted by 2L race services, but held at Alvernia University, only it was on a Sunday so there were some complications.

Head Coach, Mr. Blatt says that this is our first year having this meet and normally we do not have meets on Sundays, so it was different and somewhat challenging to get it approved. He says, "Originally the track team was only supposed to have five winter meets this year and adding in these meets would be making it so that there are six meets, adding to the complications. We also could not make it mandatory because it is on Sunday," but he believes it is a nice meet to have for those who want to come. He hopes that we can keep the meet going for future upcoming years, although it will likely still be held on a Sunday because the college has other events going on other days. He also thinks it was nice that this meet was just Berks County because it is more of the schools we will be seeing in spring track.

Runner Hunter Jennings liked this meet. He says that it is just Berks County so it was a smaller meet which means it also went by faster which he enjoyed. He also likes it because sometimes the Saturday meets that are held are just long, crowded, and drawn out, and this one did not feel that way.

Overall, although there may have been some difficulties getting the meet into place, athletes and coaches seemed to enjoy the experience which is the most important part.



Student Spotlight - Graylea Knight

Ana Smith - 9

As students get older and more familiar with high school they might want to get more involved. Graylea Knight is a perfect example, with a busy, interesting, and entertaining life inside and outside of school.

Graylea is a freshman at Hamburg Area High School and is involved in many activities. She is the treasurer of the ninth grade class and enjoys class office a lot. Not only does she get to handle the money, but she also helps make flyers, organize fundraisers, and so much more. She is also involved in Student Council. She says, "It is a great way to help out the school and community." Graylea enjoys staying busy and likes having things to do.

Outside of school she does much more. She is involved in four sports: softball, golf, cross country, and skiing. Graylea has been skiing since three years old and her favorite travel destination is Whistler, Colorado. "I loved it there because I got to do my favorite thing in a beautiful place with my family and friends."

In her free time, Gray enjoys doing Girl Scouts, playing instruments, and crafting. She started Girl Scouts at a young age and is still involved. She plays three instruments. Graylea plays the violin and has done that for six years. She also has played the saxophone for five years and enjoys playing it in her free time. Lastly, at home she taught herself how to play the piano. She has been working on it for the past two years.

One of Graylea's big goals in life is to travel to all of the national parks. She loves hiking, camping, biking, and being outdoors. This activity suits her personality, and it would be something she would enjoy. "Some of the big parks I want to visit first would be Yellowstone or Redwood."

Graylea values her family and friendships. Her favorite holiday is Thanksgiving because she gets to spend time with her family. She says "I get to see family that I don't see often. I also get to eat lots of great tasting food." Graylea Knight is an amazing student who works hard inside and outside of the classroom.



Stanley vs Owala

Lilly Gibson - 10

At Hamburg Area High School, most students carry around some form of water bottle. The most common ones though are Stanley cups and Owala water bottles. Over the past three years, the likings have changed rapidly. At first, it was Stanleys, but as of late last school year and this school year, Owalas have been more frequently found. In comparison, Stanleys are wider and most of the time, have a handle which makes it resemble a coffee cup. Owalas on the other hand are taller and skinnier, having a handle at the top.

One student, Alexis Freeland who is a sophomore, owns a Stanley cup. She loves it, using it almost everywhere she is. At school, it is constantly sitting on her desk or is in her hands. She says she likes it for a multitude of reasons, her main reason being that it keeps her water cold all day. "I never have to worry about my drinks getting warm because the metal keeps it cold all day long for me," said Alexis. She also likes it because of the handle as she can carry it around easier.

Another sophomore, Kaylum Riegel, has owned both a Stanley and an Owala but says she prefers his Owala a lot more. In his opinion, the Owala keeps drinks colder. He also said that it is easier to clean because of its skinnier shape. "The handle made cleaning it difficult because it didn't fit into my dishwasher easy or it took up a lot of space," said Kaylum. He also said that having the collapse straw piece is nice because he can pour the liquid into other cups that way.

While both brands of water bottle are great and good purchases, Owalas have a higher approval rating at HAHS. While the Stanley is a trend in its own standards, Owalas are just more practical for on the go use and cleaning purposes. Many who owned both said that the decision was difficult, but the shape of the Owala is the game changer for all of them. Either way, having something to keep a student hydrated is great and no matter which water bottle is chosen, Stanley or Owala, a student cannot say that they are thirsty.

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