

# Hawk Happenings

Volume XXVIII Issue 12 January 16, 2024



## Student Spotlight: Isha Kaur

Madison Redding - 11

Isha Kaur is a senior at Hamburg Area High School. Isha Kaur is known around the school for her kind personality and bright spirits and academics. She is Vice-President of GSA. Also is an anchor in tv studio, and a cast member in musical. Also being co-captain of Hamburg's cheer team, Isha explains, "Cheerleading is really great. I get to learn how to be a part of a team where everyone is really dedicated and ambitious, and get to train." If students could describe Isha they would say beautiful, kind hearted, and smart.

Isha enjoys cooking, baking, singing, Bhangra, drawing, painting, and crocheting. She also enjoys school and coming to HAHS everyday. Her favorite subject is global studies.

After high school Isha would like to attend a college and major in International Business and Political Science and then proceeding to go to a Business and Law school. Isha plans to possibly go into the political field or possibly go into acting.

Isha is in the schools musical Bye Bye Birdie. Isha exclaims, "I absolutely love musical and all the people in it. I get express my love for music and acting with a cast of people just as passionate." Isha is playing the lead's best friend, Ursula Merkle. She is a part of the singing tri-tette as well as understudy for Mrs. MacAfee who is Kim's mother. At home Isha lives with her mother and father. Isha has two fish tanks with around 10 fish in them. She also has a 26 year old sister named Karanpreet.



## Student Spotlight: Madison Redding

Sara Fitzgerald - 12

Madison Redding is a junior at Hamburg Area High School, who is involved in TV Studio and Publications. English has always been a favorite subject, and she has a huge passion for TV and film leading her to TV Studio, where she is normally an anchor. Madison loves reading; she loves experiencing someone else's point of view. Watching movies is another of her favorite things to do; she enjoys watching the movie and then learning how it was made, acting, and budgeting. Madison loves true crime and the justice that is given to their families. She wants to understand why people do such horrid things.

Madison plans on attending the University of South Carolina for a degree in nursing and continuing her education later in forensics. Nursing will help to expand her options in the medical and science field. South Carolina is one of her favorite places, and she enjoys the beach so this was an easy choice for her.

She enjoys the social aspect of her classes and the friends she has. Candy's Homemade Ice Cream Shop is where Madison works and where she has made several of her closets friends. Her biggest inspiration is her mom, who has shown Madison how to push through her struggles. Spurgin, her chihuahua, she adores completely and loves playing with. "Advice I'd give is to take it day by day and remember your mental health is important."



## HAHS Woodshop class visits local lumber shop

Harley Davis - 11

Mr. Borger has taken his upper level woodworking class and went to Bailey's Wood Products in Kempton. Wood Products is a lumberyard where HAHS select and buy wood. There are over 20 different products of wood that they sell. Mr. Borger gets wood from Bailey's and when he takes his upper level

woodworking classes he gets wood for projects all year round.

He brings the students so they can pick out their own type of wood that they would like to use in order to make their custom projects. The students learned how lumber is made from timber. They had to move lumber but there were splinters, that was not their favorite part of the trip but overall they enjoyed the trip.

Mr. Borger talked about his favorite part of the trip and it was watching the students getting excited about making a custom project and picking out their favorite wood. Mr. Borger does this every year for his upper level class and they all enjoy it. This trip was about project planning and selecting the lumber that the students would like for their project. Students can pick the project they would like to build. That includes wall signs, cutting boards, cabinets.



## Congratulations to All of the Music Students!

### Senior County Chorus

Ian Fink – 12th

Kirra Goetz – 11th

Noah Kramer – 12th

Clayton Lash – 12th

Eleanor Lytle – 10th

### District 10 Chorus

Ian Fink – 12th

Noah Kramer – 12th

Eleanor Lytle – 10th

### Lebanon Valley College Honors Choir

Christian Brown – 12th

Michael Clancey – 10th BCTC

Selena Henne – 12th

Isha Kaur – 12th

Donavan Merrick – 9th

Hannah Ortiz – 11th BCTC

Nishi Vesuwala – 12th

## Katie Stitzel attends BCTC

LeeAnn Mills - 12

Katie Stitzel is a current senior at HAHS, set to graduate on May 31, 2024. Katie attends BCTC West in Leesport and has for the past three years, making her a third-year student. The program Katie studies is Health Occupations, and chose that program in tenth grade because she is "fascinated by how the body functions [and] want[s] to help people as much as [she] can." She expresses a profound love of the Health Occupations program because she has "learned so much not only in the medical setting but also as a person."

BCTC requires each student to complete a senior project. Katie and some of her friends from BCTC decided to organize a fun run to raise awareness and money for breast cancer. A fun run is a paid volunteer race that takes place for enjoyment and support of a cause rather than competition. This specific event took place on October 13 at the BCTC West campus in Leesport with two different time sessions. All the proceeds collected, which amounted to \$700, went to an organization based in Lancaster called, Help the Fight. According to helpthefight.org, it is an organization that uses its proceeds to help men and women alike receive treatment and screenings for breast cancer or symptoms. Katie's part in the project was reaching out to Help the Fight and transferring the proceeds. The group that completed this project all worked together to come up with the theme, pink for breast cancer, create and hang up posters, and the organization of the fundraiser.

Katie says her greatest accomplishments at BCTC are being accepted into the National Technical Honor Society in eleventh grade, raising money, and organizing the fundraiser for Help the Fight.

Katie's future plan is to become an ultrasound technician. After high school, she will attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania for a bachelor's degree in Science in Medical Imaging/Diagnostic Medical Sonography.

For more information about Help the Fight visit, [www.helpthefight.org/](http://www.helpthefight.org/)





# The SMART Program begins at HAHS

Bethany Stuffle - 10

The SMART Program allows high school students to become mentors for younger kids. Mrs. Ponter is the liaison for the Big Brothers Big Sisters Program, also known as the SMART Program. This is her second year recruiting high school students as mentors, known as “Bigs,” and their job is to be a role model and helper for younger students, whether it is with homework or with overall social skills. Mrs. Ponter works closely with the BB/BS Program Administrator, Mrs. Werner. They “collect applications, arrange interviews and training, and facilitate the implementation of the mentoring program at the Middle School.” Mrs. Ponter hopes, “that the program continues to expand because I truly believe that high school mentors make a difference in the lives of younger students.”

In addition to the positive effects the program has on the younger students, it also has a positive impact on the high school students who are mentors. Mrs. Ponter says, “It looks great on college and employment applications! College recruiters and employers are sure to be impressed by seeing individuals being part of the nation’s largest mentoring network.” Students could also use this mentoring opportunity to satisfy an Act 158 graduation requirement for the service-learning hours.

The program runs at the middle school every Tuesday from 1:30 pm until 2:15 pm. Mrs. Ponter and Mrs. Werner hope that they receive enough volunteers to include Tilden Elementary in the program again as they did in the past. On Tuesday, November 14, the program started up again for this school year. Sophomore Tia Adam, describes her second year as a Big as nice and explained what they did, “We got paired with our small. Mine was a 7th grader. We were also in a new room this year. It was across from Mr. Hoffman’s room in the seventh grade hallway. There were also a different variety of kids this year, a couple from 6, 7, and 8. I enjoyed getting to know the littles especially mine. She was very nice and I helped her with her homework.”



# What Kaeli works on in publications

Brielle Cox - 9

Kaeli Cox is a junior taking her second year of publications. She enjoys having the opportunity to make the yearbook look nice for people to see. She does not want anyone’s money to go to waste. Kaeli usually sits in the back corner in the chairs with a footrest and privacy screens. She finds those seats comfortable and relaxing. Kaeli loves being able to work productively while sitting comfortably in a chair. She works on assignments for publications like articles, yearbook pages, and whatever else is in her handbook. If Kaeli is caught up on her work for publications and there is nothing due for a long time, she will catch up on work in other classes like math.

While in publications Kaeli does not like to just sit around and do nothing so she budgets her time to be productive while in the class. She is currently working on the yearbook pages for cross country. Kaeli says doing her work in the library is very efficient because there are little to no distractions and it is very quiet.

Sometimes the publications work can be a bit overwhelming for her but rarely ever. She says that even though there are only two assignments due per week, writing an article in a certain amount of time can be stressful. She tries to get her work turned in on time, but sometimes she forgets the deadline for certain assignments. But she says that she mostly turns everything in at the start of class.

One of the many perks of taking publications is you get to have a ThinkPad. It is the type of computer your teachers use. Kaeli learned how to operate one and use its advanced technology. She learned how to download apps that she will need to use while she makes the yearbook. Kaeli learned how to write exceptionally well articles that Mrs. McCarthy checks for any errors. Publications has taught Kaeli many things and she enjoys the class a lot.

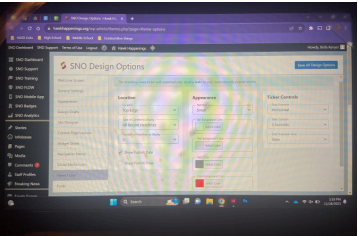


# Hawk Happenings changes look of online paper

Bella Kenyel - 9

Hawk Happenings online newspaper was launched on June 6 in 2018 after Mrs. McCarthy, Quinn Holl, Lexi Kline, and other Publications students visited Boyertown High School. In 2018, not many schools were using SNO Sites to make their online school newspaper, which is why Boyertown was the only one at that time to be the only one that was in Berks County that was using SNO Sites to publish their online news stories. At Boyertown High School, the staff showed the HAHS group on how to operate the website and post stories as well as change the format of how the website looks.

Right now, Bella Kenyel is thinking about changing how the website looks as well as adding in new categories for new stories to be put into. She also wants others in Publications to be Hawk Happenings Design Editors in the future since she is thinking about attending BCTC for the next three years.



# Students of the Month awards

Lilly Gibson - 9

Freshman Kaitlyn Gallagher and Sophomore Riley Mohn both recently received the student of the month awards, given to those who achieve it by doing several things, such as showing good character, being a good student, and brightening people’s days.

Riley Mohn said, “Mrs. Geske recommended me for Student of the Month because I am kind in her class.” Riley believes that being kind to people is one key to becoming the student of the month. Riley also says, “Do not do anything that may seem rude or inappropriate in school,” because it is basic etiquette.

Kaitlyn Gallagher shared, “I was just nice to people, and I did my work. There’s nothing better than putting a smile on someone’s face.” She also said, “If you don’t do your work, you’re going to have bad grades and that’ll give you a negative outlook on school.” Kaitlyn believes that these things are what helped her achieve receiving student of the month.

Both of these girls showed great character, a positive mental attitude, kindness, and really proved that they were hard working students inside and out of the classroom. No matter where a student may be, they deserve to be treated with kindness as well as treating others with it as well. “Make the school day seem worthwhile and brighten people’s days,” was some advice from Riley.

“My best advice for those who want to become a student of the month is to just do your best. Working hard will always benefit you whether it comes now or at a later date,” are some wise words from Kaitlyn.

# Opinion: Dress code affects students’ learning

Deja Wagner-Wakfield - 11



Dress code is a controversial topic among many schools, because many teachers, administrators, and principals believe that students should dress a certain way or should have to wear uniforms. On the other hand some believe that wearing what one wants helps express who one really is. But where is the line drawn for this? How far is too far for self expression at school? Can this affect the way students learn?

Dress code was formed after Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District of 1969, after five students had worn a black armband in response to the American involvement in the Vietnam war. The students were suspended in response to this, and they felt that they had the right to express themselves due to the First Amendment in the constitution. They had taken the case to the Iowa Civil Liberties Union, where the decision ended up in a tie. This then led them to appeal the case and take it to the Supreme Court where it was ruled with a 7-2 vote. The First Amendment applied to public schools and administrators would have to provide constitutionally valid reason for any specific regulation of self expression or speech in the school premises. This shaped the dress code and how much it can regulate a school’s restrictions on what one wears.

In recent times there have been many experiments about the concept of dress code and many varying results. Some research finds that students who wear uniforms tend to be more destructive, depressed and suffer from emotional problems, but they are more attentive in class. This also causes students to feel less of a connection with teachers and fellow students, due to not expressing their individuality. Other research shows that heavy monitoring of students’ clothing promotes conformity rather than adaptability, creativity and critical thinking. Students’ clothing choices only affect one’s learning when dressed in an extreme way and, strict dress code causes a dull learning environment with very little creativity and self expression. While other schools allow students to wear what they want to, they have restrictions upon what is and is not allowed. This can cause students stress as to finding an outfit that fits the dress code for school due to fear of reprimanding or punishment. Schools that allow students to wear what they want often have differing opinions from teacher to teacher on what they deem appropriate, this can cause further problems among students. While one teacher may deem a top appropriate another will not causing confusion, this can also cause a student to miss class due to having to change or go home. Dress code is

predominantly against females in school. This is due to their dress, skirt, or shorts can not be shorter than fingertip length, their shirts can not be too tight, too low cut, or see through. Along with having a limited selection of clothing that fits this criteria today it becomes hard for students to be able to fit the dress code. Also varying body types affects dress code among students, some students have a slimmer frame and clothing falls differently than a student who has curves.

Dress code is an important topic because while females get reprimanded to being too distracting, male students do not have to deal with that. Also males do not get punished for being distracted by something that is normal. Female students in schools are being sexualized and are being taught from a young age that males get distracted by normal female anatomy and that they must cover themselves.

I have dealt with this issue many times in my school career. I have worn an outfit that a teacher deemed inappropriate, and I had to either change or alter it somehow, but then I see someone else wearing the same thing but they have a different body type. This makes me wonder why I had gotten in trouble for my outfit but they had not. This also causes a sense of confusion and frustration as to why I can not wear an outfit but someone else can. While I was pulled out of class to be told my outfit was distracting, I had missed my lessons and lost crucial learning time. This hinders my ability to learn and makes me behind in my class all because a teacher deemed my outfit distracting. This not only happens to me but to my peers and many female students. We are pulled out of class reprimanded for our outfit and we miss class time or even a whole day of school over an outfit issue. Also the punishments for violating dress code in Hamburg Area High School are quite unreasonable, for one violation a students’ parents will be called and they will have to change, a second offense is a detention, a third offense receives two detentions and calls home to parents, and any further offenses are in school suspensions. Being punished so harshly for wearing something out of dress code is unreasonable and cruel. I feel that since one would be missing so much class time to serve their in school suspensions they should be excused from all work. This is in fact not the case and even if one is not present in class, he/she is responsible for doing all work, this also puts a dampening on a students education. Not having the full class time and experience does not allow for one to obtain all aspects of learning.

Dress code is and will be a split opinion topic, some believe that dress code should be enforced strictly and others believe that dress code should not even be a thing. While there are great arguments to both sides, I believe that there should be a fine line between dress code and freedom of expression. I believe that in today’s society we have been hurt by dress code not only mentally but academically too.

For more information on the topic visit : <https://chantillynews.org/8545/opinions/dress-codes-affect-student-learning/>  
<https://parentingscience.com/school-uniforms-what-does-research-tell-us/#:~:text=There%20is%20little%20evidence%20that,negative%20effect%20on%20well%2Dbeing.>

# REMINDER: No school on Feburary 16-19

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# LeeAnn Mills: a biography on her skills

Riley Mohn - 10

LeeAnn Mills considers herself an introverted ambivert, because she used to be a shy person until she worked in a more public-related job, so she had to open up and get adjusted to the attention. She used to dislike anything in front of people and now she volunteers to do presentations in front of others and feels comfortable speaking to others more. When necessary, LeeAnn can act more extroverted, but she is more on the introverted essence. She knows she is unable to live without her glasses and medicine because those are two necessities that she would not be able to survive without. LeeAnn is unable to live without an alarm, time, and music, so she could live without her phone, but she would need it for those two reasons. When introducing herself, LeeAnn makes it known that she considers herself weird and wants to make sure other people are aware of that. Her favorite Holiday is Halloween because it has the least interaction, it ends the quickest, and is the most fun. A Different Kind of Beautiful by Alec Benjamin is her favorite song, her favorite artist is Faouzia because her voice is amazing since it is a deep and feminine voice, but there is no mistaking her for a man. She also likes Nico Collins and Bea Miller. The biggest pet peeve of LeeAnn's is directed to those walking slowly and those walking in groups in the hallway that block the sides. Her biggest fear is wet clothing because it is a sensory overload, and she remembers when she was playing with water balloons, she knew she disliked the feeling of wet clothes. When she had a bucket of water dumped on her, she described it by saying every way one can sense something was tied to water. Everything she could hear was water, everything she could smell was water, everything she could taste was water, everything. She also dislikes rain. Playing an instrument is something LeeAnn has always wanted to do, but is unable to, since she thinks she does not have a single musical bone in her body. Her father has a tuba and can play something back to you, no matter if it is in tune or not. Spending time and speaking face to face while avoiding small talk is LeeAnn's love language. She wants to know the nitty-gritty about her friends, such as talking face to face about phases of the moon and nostalgic 2000's things. She is currently taking Spanish 4, and her sister can speak fluent Spanish. Other than her height and her glasses, LeeAnn thinks the first things people notice about her are her 'flangy' movements, where she moves quickly and rather animated, and her laughter which sounds like she is unable to breathe. LeeAnn knows her younger self would be proud of who she became today since she is not always locked in her room anymore and has wonderful friends to talk to and hang out with. Her great grandmother is someone she wishes she could have dinner with because she passed away when LeeAnn was eight, since there are very limited memories of her in LeeAnn's mind, and she wants to get to know her grandmother. Currently, LeeAnn thinks she is the happiest she has ever been. She used to not care about what she does and cruise through life. However, she enjoys the time she spends with herself, napping and going through high school.

She is most proud of her writing prowess, which is her ability to write skillfully. Friendships and her ability to put herself into her friendships are another thing LeeAnn is proud of, like her relationship with Riley Mohn, a sophomore that she practically 'adopted' accidentally, which she just allows herself to let the friendship take whatever turns it needs. As a writer, LeeAnn states that "flaws make a person more complex, and it gives them more aspects." She's also proud of getting into the college she wanted, which is the University of Iowa. Her favorite book is Time Bomb by Joelle Charbonneau, which takes place over the summer and they are stuck in a room and one person in the room created the bomb, but they do not know who. The Darkest minds by Alexandra Bracken is LeeAnn's favorite book series which is a dystopian series where kids are born with powers relating to the colors of the rainbow. Red, orange and yellow are classified as dangerous. Green and blue are just regular powers. The main character is Ruby, who has orange powers and accidentally erases her parent's minds. The quote she lives by is from Maya Angelou, "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside of you" because as a writer, she feels she needs to write and get her stories out. She thinks that putting how she determines a piece is well-written is rather subjective, and she says perfection is something that belongs to math assignments; one that has specific answers that do not differ from several students. When a teacher gives full credit for an assignment, that can be for the grammar or the spelling or the punctuation, because a piece of literature can be rewritten thousands of times differently and still answer the question with proper grammar. She determines her pieces are well-written when they have a deeper meaning, and use an extended and varying vocabulary. The best writing tool for LeeAnn is the thesaurus, and she thinks that nobody is better than a thesaurus. Sentence starting choices are something that LeeAnn dislikes, when they start with the exact same word. Determining a writing style is something LeeAnn loves. Writing 'says' and 'said' is something LeeAnn thinks has a specific place that fits because it is a basic and commonly known term, but she thinks that it is something that needs varying instead of being the same word in different forms. Reading and writing are her biggest passions. Writing has been a passion of hers for a while, which she used to not be certain how good she was at it, until she found it easy and natural to write an

essay in under 30 minutes. She says that "writing is the fuel to my fire," and it has been since she was young. LeeAnn does not find any forms of writing difficult. Her weaknesses as a writer are spelling and certain aspects of grammar. She remembers she had once spelled monkey as 'monci' before. She knows that her writing style is very elegant like a scholar from the 1800s, she says she sounds smart when she writes, and she is able to come up with ideas easily. LeeAnn does not believe anything exists if it cannot be proven, agnostic even, and she just enjoys what she has. She knows that science can be proven and she remembers a man once said "if you take away all the books in the world, science, fantasy fiction, science books will come back the same, since science's job is to constantly disprove itself." When asked about morals, she knows that morals do not necessarily start from religion, and she knows that it is wrong to commit crimes because it just is.

Mrs. McCarthy-Wright is LeeAnn's biggest role model. When she had interviewed her, getting to know her and her life was one of the most enriching experiences LeeAnn has ever had, and she knows people can go to her for anything. LeeAnn gets notes and little messages from Mrs. McCarthy and she loves knowing the effort and getting to know people. Before LeeAnn met Mrs. McCarthy, her role model was her sister, who is still a huge role model in her life. Her sister is 28 years old, and she is incredibly smart and took two languages. LeeAnn enjoys knowing that her sister can have fun and is not afraid to love and show care. When LeeAnn has headaches, her sister helps soothe her headaches. LeeAnn's sister is in the medical field, and has shown how determined she is to become a doctor. LeeAnn likes laughing with her sister, and when her sister showed a song to LeeAnn that was an acoustic and soft cover of a hard rap song. The best advice LeeAnn has recieved recently was "get out of your comfort zone because that's when the lightbulb moments happen" from Mrs. McCarthy-Wright because people should not take life too seriously and they should live more carefree. When asked if LeeAnn would change anything about herself, she answers that she has forced herself to accept who and what she is and that everything will come out okay because she always has had herself. She believes that her past self from two years ago would have written a three-page response on what she would have changed about her. LeeAnn is okay with the fact that some days she might not like everything about herself at the moment, but she knows that thought can be temporary, and it is okay to feel that way.

As someone with diagnosed chronic anxiety, she has lived with stress for a while, she always likes plans listed ahead of time, she always asks questions even as a kid. It has gotten better for LeeAnn over the years with medicine and therapy, and she still has panic attacks. LeeAnn knows her stress helps her create to-do lists and helps her stay organized to a schedule. On a random day in seventh grade, LeeAnn started to uncontrollably put her head to her shoulder and she would also randomly kick. The doctor said it was a muscle spasm, but it was tourettes. She was called a 'sudden acute onset'. She went to a neurologist that specializes in tourettes and was able to get proper medication and how to control it easier.



## Mrs. McCarthy thrives in Hamburg

LeeAnn Mills - 12

Most students and parents know the HAHS librarian as Mrs. McCarthy: the publications teacher, Leo club advisor, senior class advisor, vice president of the Hamburg Area Education Foundation, and past student-council advisor. However, most do not know that she had been advising the student council for nine years and is currently advising the Leo club for the nineteenth year, or that she has been the senior class advisor for about 14 years. Mrs. McCarthy loves her job and it all started a long time ago, back in third grade. Many high school students fluctuate possible career paths multiple times throughout elementary, middle, and high school, yet Mrs. McCarthy was deadset. Her third-grade teacher at St. Paul's Catholic School in Wisconsin, Mrs. Koebel, inspired her so much that she wanted to become a third-grade teacher just like her. Young Mrs. McCarthy would teach or pretend to be a news broadcaster to her stuffed animals, trees, plants, or any

inanimate objects. Quickly her love of school and teaching turned into tutoring. Time flew by and it was time for college. Mrs. McCarthy fell in love with DeSales University and only applied there, but when she went to decide on a major, they did not have elementary education. Hence, she decided to study secondary education and English and communications.

After years of university, Mrs. McCarthy taught one year at Reading Central Catholic and did not like it there because the focus was on sports and not learning. However, at this school, she started yearbook-making with Mrs. Herman, Reading Central Catholic's yearbook advisor. Deciding to move away from the school she did not like, Mrs. McCarthy started teaching at Hamburg and has been here for the past 28 years. In those 28 years, she has not always been the librarian, nor teaching the same classes. When she first arrived she taught, in what now is Mrs. Steven's room, 11th and 9th grade English. At this time the newspaper and yearbook were also done by Mrs. McCarthy but not in a class, like the current publications, instead, it was an afterschool activity and done on paper.

Currently, the yearbook is done on a program called Adobe InDesign, on Windows machines, by publications students. When Mrs. McCarthy first started at Hamburg, they would use carbon paper to draw out the yearbook designs twice, one for the printing company and one for the school. Then the printing company would design the yearbook on computers for them. Either way, the yearbook is extremely important to Mrs. McCarthy, along with the newspaper. One of her school-related goals is to "keep making awesome yearbooks and newspapers that reflect the time period."

At one period of time, Mrs. McCarthy taught both in Mrs. Steven's room and in the current tech room. Before the tech room used to be in the back room where the color printer is in the library. A few years before moving to the library, Mrs. McCarthy made another move to a storeroom back near the woodshop. This room was used as the TV studio and video classes before another teacher and eventually, Mrs. Eshbach came to take over those electives. In the early 2000s technology was on the rise, so Hamburg wanted to add video classes, however, they did not have anyone to teach them. Mrs. McCarthy has a degree in Communications and was chosen to teach the class. Except when she was in college, there were no video classes, so she had to teach a class on a subject she was not extremely familiar with. Although, she took theatre class.

Eight years ago, Mrs. McCarthy made the move to the library. She was the most fit candidate for the job because in university and over the summer she worked at DeSales in their library, where she earned he elementary education degree. However, university and high school libraries are different. Thus, the Perry Elementary School librarian, Mrs. Koller, would come to the high school for one hour every day to show Mrs. McCarthy the daily tasks.

One of her favorite hobbies is traveling. She has been traveling all her life, starting with her parents in her youth and continuing with international exhibitions. When Mrs. McCarthy was young her parents would take her on at least one big trip a year, which may be the cause of her traveling avocation. Her father is also from Ireland, so Mrs. McCarthy loves to travel there and has been twice. She is also planning another trip to Ireland in 2026. She used to organize international and national school trips for students, but now organizes international trips available to students and families not through the school, like the senior trip to Costa Rica!

Now, Mrs. McCarthy is an experienced HAHS librarian, with a master's in library science from Kutztown University, who puts lots of extra work into the school, travels constantly, and raises dogs for the blind through the seeing eye. Last year, a dog Mrs. McCarthy was training, Paul, was placed with a blind man in Florida. Now we are waiting on news from Raphi, who was just taken back to the seeing eye.

A while back in HAHS history, around 2008, there was a life skills aide who raised a dog for the seeing eye, which inspired Mrs. McCarthy to do the same. To be able to have the dog in the school, Mrs. McCarthy had to get the approval of the school board. The first dog she trained was Wolfgang in 2016, but he never ended up being placed, and Mrs. McCarthy adopted him. Mrs. McCarthy has trained five dogs, but there are a lot of guidelines. These dogs cannot play tug, give paw, shake, get in the bed, or do lots of other things.

Mrs. McCarthy is a very engaged person, a great teacher, and advisor, but she has some advice for students and parents, or anyone. She considers her greatest achievements to be her degrees, passion for learning, and the work that went into all of that. However, everyone fails and Mrs. McCarhty expresses her biggest failure or regret as "not giving some relationships the amount of time and dedication that they needed." Her advice to students, adolescents, or anyone willing to listen is "life is too short," be relaxed and carefree, try new things, find the people that infuse happiness into life, experience more, and jump out of the comfort zone "because that is when those light bulb moments will be made."

## BCTC Student Spotlight: Skye-Lynn Behn

Chloe Stitzel - 10

Skye-Lynn Behn, sophomore, goes to Berks Career and Technology Center for Cosmetology. She does not want to go to college but she wants to be a cosmetologist right after BCTC.

Skye thinks that the environment of BCTC is amazing. Students get to choose what they want to learn and have a head start for after school. Her first expectations of BCTC were for it to be very open and friendly. She has made new friends and is doing very well with socializing with the other people there.

Skye is currently learning how to do rollers. A hair roller or hair curler is a small tube that is rolled into a person's hair in order to curl it, or to straighten curly hair. Skye has learned a lot of things this year including ph levels, elevations of the head, draping, and so much more. She has volunteered before for the walk-ins to see if they are interested.

Skye says that it feels very nice but stressful to be a hair stylist at the same time. She enjoys doing people's hair and making people feel better about themselves.

Skye's aunt inspired her to be a cosmetologist. Her aunt had her own cosmetology business. She states, "I recommend going to BCTC because everyone is so nice and the environment is great."





# Movie review: While You Were Sleeping

Hailey Quinn - 11

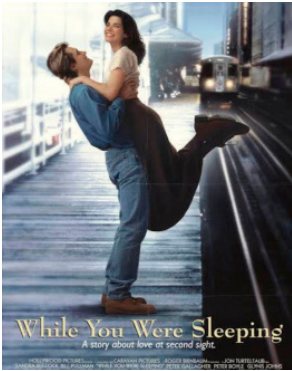
While You Were Sleeping is a heartwarming romantic comedy directed by Jon Turteltaub. It was first released in 1995 and features an entertaining cast including Sandra Bullock, Peter Gallagher, Bill Pullman, Peter Boyle, and more.

The film centers around Lucy, played by Sandra Bullock, a lonely transit worker who saves Peter Callaghan, played by Peter Gallagher, from an oncoming train. This leads Peter’s family to mistakenly believe that Lucy is his fiancée while he is in a coma. Lucy, feeling a sense of warmth and belonging with Peter’s family, decides not to correct the misunderstanding, creating a series of hilarious and heartwarming events. As she attempts to navigate through the complexities of a false identity, Lucy becomes very close with Peter’s brother, Jack, played by Bill Pullman.

The relationship between Jack and Lucy is filled with an awkward charm and genuine affection. Jack was initially skeptical of Lucy and her newly formed relationship with the Callaghan family. However, the skepticism slowly fades away and is replaced by genuine connection as they begin to spend more time together. The film follows as a heartwarming romance between Lucy and Jack develops through a series of both comedic and touching moments.

Sandra Bullock’s portrayal of Lucy is both relatable and endearing. Her character connects with the audience, adding to the homey feel of the movie. Her chemistry with Bill Pullman creates a genuine and sweet layer that is effective in capturing the hearts of the viewers. Bill Pullman’s portrayal of Jack brings a sense of warmth and authenticity to the character, making the evolving romance even more engaging.

The film’s success lies not only in its engaging plot and talented cast, but also in its ability to balance humor with genuine moments of tenderness. It explores themes of family, love, and the unexpected turns life can take, all set against the backdrop of a snowy Chicago during the holiday season, adding to the film’s cozy atmosphere. The script is cleverly written, offering a perfect blend of humor, romance, and a touch of holiday magic. Whether it is a first time view or a nostalgic revisit, the film continues to resonate with audiences, making it a beloved classic and holiday favorite.



# Students join Choir

Elaina Hess - 10

Choir is an elective at HAHS and is open for any student who likes singing to join. It is also a great experience and opportunity for high school students to meet new people with similar interests. The director, Mrs. Jackson always makes choir fun and productive so they learn the songs and are ready for the spring and winter concerts. In the beginning of the year they learn some Christmas and other songs to get ready for the winter concert. Later in the year, they learn songs for the spring concert. Sometimes they also sing at other events for the community.

Sophomore Riley Mohn joined the choir this year. She describes this as a fun experience where she can meet others who enjoy singing. She joined with her friends so she is excited that she can share this experience with them. Riley loves the people in the choir describing them as “warm and inviting.” She hopes to continue to be involved in choir next year.

Freshman Landon Poullos, joined the HAHS choir this year. He is new to high school and described the choir as fun and welcoming but also stressful. It may be difficult to manage being a new high school student and also managing to give up flex period every other day to go to choir. Nevertheless, he still enjoys this experience and hopes to continue being in choir all throughout his high school career.



# Winter disrupts the sleep cycle

Landon Poullos - 9

Winter is here, but it does not feel like it. Winter occurs when the Earth’s axis points away from the sun, which is the reasoning for why seasons occur and why some places on Earth are always hot or cold.

According to www.weather.gov, almost every place on Earth has about 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night. This is an estimate of course. In order to accompany this, there is this thing called daylight savings time. Daylight savings disrupts the sleep schedule and causes mental struggles within adults and teens. Although the United States has debated on keeping daylight savings time, as of now it is still in action. The original reason for this circumstance was to conserve energy during the war time. It helps people make more use of the daylight rather than working in the dark.

Scientists from www.sleepfoundation.org, have proven that losing an hour of sleep is bad for one’s mental health, it disrupts the humans sleeping patterns, and it jumps the circadian rhythms out of the normal track. The circadian clock is an internal clock in the brain that goes through. It is when the brain responds to the light changes in the environment.

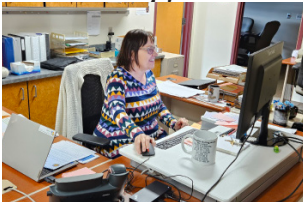
# Mrs. Fink supports the HAHS Counseling office

LeeAnn Mills - 12

Without a doubt, the HAHS guidance office is one of the busiest places in the high school, dealing with student transcripts, transfer students, and confidential student information. To help manage the large workload, Mrs. Fink, working as the secretary, manages most student files, counselor meetings, phone calls, and sending final transcripts for seniors to go to college. A typical workday for her never looks the same from day to day, as there is heaps of work to complete. Mrs. Fink says she “like[s] to be busy” so this job is the perfect fit for her.

Originally, when Mrs. Fink graduated from Kutztown High School in 1980, she did not want to go to college. Her objectives for post-high-school life were to enter the workforce and become a mother. She had two wonderful daughters, but as they grew up and needed less personal care, Mrs. Fink looked for a job. Initially, in 1999 she was hired as a substitute teacher at HAHS. In 2007 she took on her current position as the guidance office secretary from working as the building clerk.

Mrs. Fink’s biggest regret is not going to school to be a nurse, and taking the necessary classes in high school. For a while, she worked in a nursing home and loved it, but never went further with that passion. Because of this experience, she says to any questioning high school students, “It is not easy and you have to make your life what you want it to be: positive, happy, interesting. When you get those chances, I say take them. Do as much as you can!”



# Alaena takes on basketball

Brielle Cox - 9

Alaena Cox is a freshman playing her first year of high school basketball. She has played it since third grade when she was eight years old. Over the summer she attended open gyms held by coach McBreen, played in scrimmages, and even joined a Kutztown high school basketball camp. Alaena said, “The Kutztown camp was fun and beneficial.”

Alaena wanted to come into the season strong, so she attended all the open gyms she could until official practice started on November 17. She originally thought that the practices were going to be a lot more running than they actually are. She is enjoying the practices, says they are a lot of fun, and she learns a lot in just one practice.

From the start Alaena got familiar with senior Alexia Ewing and sophomores Kyla Rogers and Kayla Hix. Alaena has some trouble asking the coach for help, so she looks to Kyla and Alexia for help when she can not understand a post drill. Alaena likes how practices are right after school so she does not have to go home then come back. This was a change since field hockey. Because there is a lot of time after practice, Alaena does not have to worry about not getting homework done.

Alaena likes the drill Get Tough because it involves a lot of aggression, and she wants to improve on being more aggressive when going up to the basket. However she does not like the Tennessee drill, because it involves a lot of back and forth running.

On November 28, only 11 days into the season, the Lady Hawks had a scrimmage against Saucon Valley and Nativity. It was the first intense game in a while for Alaena. She said it was definitely different from middle school. Alaena puts a lot of pressure on herself in games, but she feels like since she is considered on the varsity team it is just natural. December 1 and 2 there was a tip-off tournament that would kick the team into the actual season. The Hawks played Tri Valley first and won 50 to 36 putting them into the championship. Elco won their game against Annville-Cleona making them the Hawks competition for the win. The Hawks played a great game but could not come out with the win. Alaena thought it was fun but she felt unprepared to play in the games.

# Staff Spotlight: Mrs. Benvenuto

Sara Fitzgerald - 12

Mrs. Brittany Benvenuto has taught in the Hamburg school district for her entire educational career. She began teaching with a student teaching placement with Mr. Zimmerman while finishing her last semester at Bloomsburg. However, she did not begin at Bloomsburg University but instead at Lehigh Carbon Community College because her high school Tamaqua gave her two years of free tuition there. She transferred to Bloomsburg then as she liked the campus and the rural area. During her years at Bloomsburg, Mrs. Benvenuto was in their history club and president during her senior year of college. She

chose to teach history because of the interest she found in it as a child after watching Braveheart and The Patriot at a young age.

Her inspirations come from her family and her students. Growing as a person with her students is one of Mrs. Benvenuto’s aspirations as a teacher. She believes that she can learn from them as much as they can learn from her. Hamburg offers a great group of students, teachers, and administrators. She believes that the support she receives from the administration is amazing and she is lucky to have that. In 1989 her father graduated from Hamburg after being a participant in football, track, and baseball. Because of this, she has always felt a connection to Hamburg and believes it to be a second home.

Most students know her as Ms. Stauffer but over the summer she got married becoming Mrs. Benvenuto. Her husband and she have been renovating their house and have made it to the final step, their basement, this takes up most of her time outside of school. Trixie, their five-year-old terrier mix, travels to the closest states with them as another one of Mrs. Benvenuto’s hobbies is traveling. Vermont was her favorite so far, she enjoyed the dog-friendly environment, including the stores and restaurants. The goal is to visit as many of the 50 states as possible with her husband, Mr. Benvenuto.

# Hamburg Area High School is excited for the New Year

Alaena Cox - 9

Over winter break an exciting event happened other than Christmas; New Year. This holiday marks the end of the year and the start of a new one. A lot of people do traditions like eating twelve grapes under a table or eating pork and sauerkraut. Another popular tradition people do is set a new year’s resolution or an action that they would like to complete or progress on as the year progresses.

Landon Poullos, a freshman at Hamburg Area High School, talks about his New Year’s resolution: to not let people get the best of him. He chose this because he said, “At the time my friend group was breaking apart and it felt like they were using me.” With this being said he has said that his 2023 resolution was fulfilled. “It was a long process, but worth it,” he said.

Brielle Cox, another freshman at Hamburg Area High School, shared about her 2024 resolution. Her goal for this year is to not procrastinate. She plans on finishing this resolution by writing the date everything is assigned in her agenda and more efficiently working on them. Brielle plans to feel less stressed about due dates and more worried about getting work done.

# Students happy with gifts

Koa Binder - 9

The holidays are now over, and although it is sad to see them go, many students at HAHS got some new things they are very thankful for. Freshman Dakota Schneider got a few things she is especially excited about. “My favorite gift I received this year was a kitten.” Dakota’s cat is named Pepper and she was very excited to finally get one. “This was my favorite gift because I’ve been wanting a cat for a long time now.”

Another student, Chase Brodhead, got all of the things he asked for. In all he got 15 presents. His favorite gift was his seafoam green Jordans.

Students can get presents for other people too, of course. “I got presents for my friends Hailee and Dakota as well as my friend Kaylea because our friend group did Secret Santa,” says Chase. Dakota got presents for her mom and a few of her friends. They paid for these presents with their own hard earned money. “It feels good being financially independent enough to buy presents for friends and family,” Chase states.

Christmas should not be all about the presents, of course. Though gift giving and receiving is something many people enjoy doing, nobody should forget about the family aspect. Christmas is a time to spend with your family and friends and anyone who is able to do that should be very grateful. “I think Christmas is about spending time with your family and eating good food but presents are also an important part of Christmas,” Dakota says.

