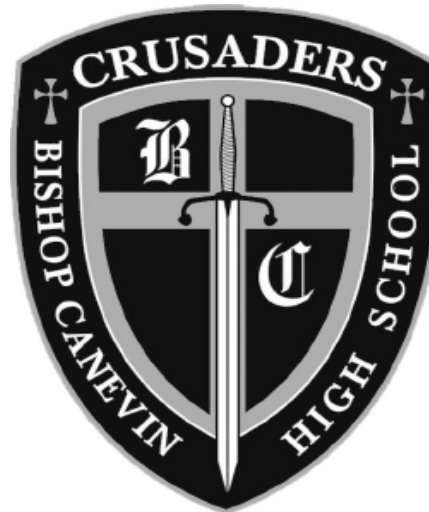


# THE LEONID

Vol. LVII No. 1

Bishop Canevin High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.

November 10, 2017



## One Man, One Guitar

### How religion teacher Mark Lang fell in love with music

Schanelle Saldanha | Co-Editor-in-Chief



Photo courtesy of Regan Adamski

During the Day Away assembly, religion teacher Mark Lang showcases his musical talents.

As the enthusiasm and joyful cheers from the audience resonate through the venue, Mark Lang takes the stage with his side kick – his infamous guitar.

Many may know Lang as the cheerful, friendly religion teacher located in the B-Side hallway. Driven with a passion for teaching God's word, Lang instills in his students the values of living a life according to Jesus Christ. But, whether you have had him for class or have simply been greeted by his smile, you cannot walk through the halls for more than a week

and not hear the echoing sounds of his guitar.

His first go at the guitar was in 1992, when he was a freshman at the University of Notre Dame.

"I picked it up because I wanted a cathartic outlet to express my emotions," Lang said.

The start was not all that easy, though. It was initially a challenge to figure out the basics because of the shape that the guitar was in, as he purchased it from a local pawn shop. But, that did not stop him from continuing to play.

Lang's love for the instrument continued to flourish throughout his college years. He joined his first band, George and The Freaks while at Notre Dame. He recalls the amazing memories they made playing at concerts in and around South Bend, Ind. The band received immense success, getting to travel around the world and perform in countries like China and India.

"Although I never really tried to win any awards, playing the guitar has been very rewarding," Lang said. "We played on the Great Wall of China and performed for many fundraisers in India."

More than anything, Lang hopes to spread his love of music to others. You can find him playing at Mass, teaching students the guitar and even moderating the Six String Songwriters Guild – a club dedicated to teaching students to become crafted songwriters and performers. Lang is constantly inspiring his students, both in religion class and during guitar lessons. Senior Chuckie Rakaczky has taken guitar lessons from Lang for the past three years.

"The biggest thing I've learned from Mr. Lang is probably the connection between music and the soul," Rakaczky said.

Rakaczky has played guitar for most of his life and often joins Lang in the Praise Ensemble for the school liturgies. He says that Lang has helped him develop not only as a guitarist, but also as a song writer.

"Mr. Lang is a big advocate of writing your own music because it is really a good way to do some self-discovery," Rakaczky said.

Additionally, Lang makes it a priority to sing and play the guitar to his classes every Friday. He gets out his guitar and sings to each one of his classes to connect that element of music with spirituality and to also just have some fun.

Lang and his wife Emily recently added a new addition to their family – their daughter Bowie Takada. He hopes that Bowie too will learn the art of the guitar and enjoy it as much as he does. In fact, she is already getting an early start into the world of music.

"When I practice the guitar at home, she always lays by my feet and listens. I cannot wait to teach her the guitar someday, too," Lang said.

While Lang loves to listen to soul music, he also simply enjoys sitting down and getting the chance to improvise in any genre or theme that he feels compelled to delve into.

One thing is for sure - regardless of where Lang goes, his guitar will always be at his side.

## Crossing the Pacific in Search of a New Life

### Junior Lee Li's experience living the "American Dream"

Marissa Pekular | Co-Editor-in-Chief

Imagine coming to a country where you do not know anyone. Imagine barely speaking the native language or knowing anything about the specific culture, all in the name of change and a sense of adventure. Not many can say that they have experienced such a culture shock. However, one student can, junior Lee Li.

Li grew up in Guang Zhou, China and came to America as a foreign exchange student in 2014. He came to the school that same year.

"I just wanted to have fun here. I feel that China was becoming boring. Everyday I was doing the same thing so I decided to come to America," Li said. "I wanted a different life and schooling experience. I think it's not a big school, but I like it here. It's nice."

Now Li is embarking on his junior year, looking forward to the future and what it holds.

To ordinary citizens, the American culture may not seem unique because they are immersed in it everyday. However, Li thinks it is rather special.

"It's a whole different culture. It's so interesting," Li said. "I've never played football before, but I started and I'm having so much fun. There's no football in China."

Football is a big part of American culture but non-existent in China. There are many prominent differences between the two cultures, sometimes making it hard to adapt.

"The people are so different. I mean it's the way the people live," Li said. "For example, we have to come to school early here. In China, you have to be at school all day into the night. To me, this was a very significant difference. The food is also very different, but I like both."

Although moving to a foreign country and learning the ways of that culture may sound

like an amazing experience, some obstacles stood in Li's way.

"I had a hard time when I left because I knew I wouldn't see my family again for like nine or 10 months," Li said. "I'm very close with my grandparents. Sometimes, I'm homesick and I miss them so much, but I knew what I signed up for when I decided to be a foreign exchange student."

Although some hardships followed Li on his way to America, he has been able to live out the American high school experience.

"I have enjoyed Canevin. It's a fun school. Everyone here is nice and I really get along with my classmates. They significantly help me through the present language problem," Li said. "The best thing I've done so far is make so many friends. Maybe at first I didn't understand much English, but everybody helped me and it made me really happy."

Li has big plans for his future. In under

two years he will graduate and move on to his next big adventure.

"I might go to a place where I've never been to before," Li said. "I like to travel and I want to visit Europe. Everything is so different between each country. I want to travel the world. That's my dream," Li said.

By the time he graduates, Li will have experienced many different cultures and have memories he can take with him when he goes back home.

"The world is so big. There are so many different places and countries," Li said. "So, I mean, there's so many different people with different lives and different cultures. I just want to say maybe you should step out of your world to see the outside world."

Although Li had a difficult time adjusting to the language barrier, he is enjoying his American experience as a part of the school community.

# Trump's Influence Can Hurt the Dreamers

Without DACA, nearly

300,000 people could be deported

Marissa Pekular | Co-Editor-in-Chief

The controversy regarding the DACA program creates an environment of ambiguity and fear for students and families dependent on the organization.

DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. It is an American immigration policy, created by the Obama Administration in 2012, allowing individuals who entered the country as minors to receive a two year period of deferred action from deportation. The recipients are also eligible for a work permit.

According to CNN, in 2017, 800,000 "Dreamers" were enrolled in DACA. Those who are protected under this program are known as the "Dreamers." The majority of these minors grew up in America, went to school here and anticipated a solid future in this country. However, in early September, the Trump Administration revisited this executive order and debated the idea of disbanding DACA all together.

DACA recipients have been able to come out from hiding and live normal lives. They have the ability to obtain valid driver's licenses, enroll in school and legally secure jobs. This program protects Dreamers against deportation and a harder life in an unfamiliar country if deported. Although Trump is aware of the benefits of DACA, officials will no longer accept any new applications for the program. Trump's next move is unclear. Either way, thousands of lives will be affected.

"I think it's a practical solution; however, it doesn't solve the whole problem. It's a moral issue," religion teacher George Schlicht said. "Their parents brought them over here and they had nothing to do with it. It's a complex problem. Criminals should be

deported, but it's impossible to deport them all. DACA is a step in the right direction but it doesn't solve all the problems."

Schlicht explained that there needs to be a better solution to this problem.

When asked what he would do if he were president, Schlicht said, "I would try to control immigration and increase surveillance. I'm not saying we should build a wall, but we cannot let in illegal immigrants. It's just not ethical."

Senior Danny Bigley counters Schlicht's opinion, giving a different point of view.

"In the case of DACA, I focus my stance on the fact that DACA recipients were minors when they were brought to the country. The key words in this are minors and brought, because it highlights that they did not choose to break immigration law," Bigley said.

Some may agree with Trump and some may side with the Dreamers. Either way, an executive decision must be made. Students and young children are living in fear and anxiety, hoping that they can continue to receive valuable education and rights in America.

History teacher David Casavale shares his experience with teaching some of these students.

"I started my teaching career at an at-risk urban school in Hartford, Connecticut," Casavale said. "We had a lot of students from the Latino population. Today, those kids are in college thriving and now they have all of this uncertainty and anxiety dealing with this situation."

It is unclear what congress will do next. According to CNN, if they do not act soon, nearly 300,000 people could lose their status and be at risk for deportation.

# The Battle is Far from Over

Campus sexual assault guidelines under Title IX have been rescinded

Brianna Caridi | News Editor

Under the Trump Administration, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos is attempting to limit Title IX guidelines established by the Obama Administration that deal with campus sexual assaults.

According to CNN, DeVos feels that many people that are accused of harassment or sexual assault are wrongly held accountable for these crimes, and the current process denies these people their due process of law. As of Sept. 22, the Education Department decided to formally revoke the guidelines determining how schools should handle sexual assaults under Title IX.

Title IX is commonly thought of as the law established to ensure the equality of girls' and boys' sports teams, but it is much more than that. Title IX includes a detailed description of how schools are expected to handle accusations of sexual assaults.

"It's a personal issue for me," Assistant Principal Karen Walker said. "My daughter Emily [Walker] was in graduate school at the University of Texas and did have to file a Title IX complaint because there was another student who she felt was harassing her."

According to the Supreme Court, a school becomes legally responsible when the school's response to the harassment is "clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstances."

"To be a parent and get a phone call from your child saying that she is being made to feel uncomfortable is very difficult," Walker said. "Because she was in Texas, I couldn't go there and rescue her."

Based on information from CNN, the Education Department has released a Q&A in lieu of the Title IX guidelines which suggests recommendations for how schools should handle sexual assaults. The Q&A allows for schools to be "flexible" in establishing their own procedures.

"From what I read, different universities interpret it in different ways," Walker said of the Title IX guidelines.

NBC News reports that the biggest change DeVos is implementing into the guidelines is that schools will be moving away from a "preponderance of evidence" model to a "clear and convincing standard of proof."

As for Walker's daughter's experience, "The process that she went through was long and tedious. It was not as if, at that particular school, that the process favored her," Walker said.

Although the Obama-era guidance was mainly aimed at colleges and universities, DeVos' plans for new guidelines to include K-12 schools as well.



Photo courtesy of Karen Walker

University of Texas student Emily Walker stared sexual harassment dead in the face while in graduate school.

High schools have fortunately not encountered as many instances of harassment as some universities have in which Title IX needed to be discussed. However, high schools still must keep accurate security measures and procedures in place in case a situation involving Title IX would occur.

At the school, there are many security measures in place to ensure the safety of all students, faculty and staff. Over the summer, 56 security

**"To be a parent and get a phone call from your child saying that she is being made to feel uncomfortable is very difficult"**

*Karen Walker, Vice Principal*

cameras were installed around the building.

"It was a safe-school grant from the diocese," Dean of Students and Athletic Director Shawn Holup said.

"After considering what would be reasonable to upgrade, we decided to get some new security cameras for around the building."

Beyond that, the school does have a clearly-stated policy regarding sexual harassment in the handbook.

"It is an immediate 25 conduct points, which brings you to the level of suspension. If the harassment is serious enough, you are expelled," Walker said.

As for the future of Title IX, DeVos wants schools to continue to confront these horrible crimes head-on, but it is unclear how she will ensure the safety of students if she changes or limits the guidelines.

"I don't feel that anything that would happen with Title IX would make us change our school policy in any regard; it's just simply not tolerated here," Walker said. "Regardless of what federal, state or local government would say, that's just our policy as a Catholic high school."

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# Love at First Text

## Social media is the culprit of changing dating trends

Macalia Ziolkowski | *Managing Editor*



Photo courtesy of Michael Lesifko

Michael Lesifko and his wife Cindy are all smiles on their wedding day, April 25, 1981.

Dating standards are different for both men and women. Old fashioned dating styles for men consisted of asking for parent permission, bringing women flowers on the first date, talking on the phone, picking women up at the door and many other stipulations that our generation would find rather demanding. Women, on the other hand, had to wait for men to ask them on a date and pray that their parents would let them go. In the past, a woman never had to worry about asking a man out or paying for the check.

In today's dating world, there is much less face to face because of the frequent use of social media. Teenagers have been using technology more and more to communicate rather than having face to face conversations or even in person dates. Dating has also become more about finding a *soulmate* through online dating sites such as Match.com and Eharmony.com, rather than meeting a person and kindling a relationship in person.

"The preferred way to ask someone

out on a date was face to face," biology teacher Michael Lesifko said of 20th century dating.

However, Lesifko and his wife Cindy went against such dating norms. Cindy was the one who asked Lesifko on a date to a show in Pittsburgh. A year into the romance, they decided to get married. Lesifko said that they both knew they were meant for each other.

This does not happen very much anymore. Relationships today start off with months of talking through social media. Social media takes away from the more personal aspect of starting a relationship with someone by removing the chemistry between them.

"If you have a date with someone, you have probably already been talking to them for a few months," senior Andrés Recalde said of 21st century dating. "The first date is most likely the start of the relationship."

Another problem in today's dating world is how to define it. Some say that the definition of dating is talking with a person or being with someone almost every day. Others say just seeing each other more than once a week is dating.

Dating to me means caring for a person and accepting everything about them, it is not about how often you go out with a person. If you love a person and feel a strong connection with him or her and vice versa, you are probably in a relationship.

"Today there is more societal pressure on kids to have a relationship because of the use of social media," Lesifko said.

There needs to be more face to face interaction or as the generations go on the in person love connection and sentimental value of a relationship will start to lose importance. Everyone has their opinion on what type of dating style they prefer.

"From what I know about old school dating, I feel like I would not mind experiencing it," junior Makenzie Butler said.

Will we ever get back the random love letters and surprise flower deliveries? As humans, we need to become more interactive and power down the technology in order to open our eyes and see what is in front of us, not what is behind a screen.

# Under Pressure

## Balancing sports with academics is too much for students to handle

Brianna Caridi | *News Editor*

The clock ticks as you stare at the blank math test in front of you. You do not know any of the answers because you had soccer practice, a Spanish club meeting and an English paper to write the night before and you did not have time to study. Sound familiar?

As high school students, we are expected to get straight A's, participate in a multitude of clubs and activities and maintain a blossoming social life outside of school. Not to mention, we have to get a full eight hours of sleep every night and still spend time with our families. At some point, we are going to crack under the pressure.

Balancing academics with a social life is a difficult task in itself, but for students that play a sport, this level of difficulty instantly increases.

According to the National Federation of State High School Associations, 7,680,900 students participated in high school sports in 2016. Based on information from The Atlantic, 49% of all high school students report feeling "a great deal of stress" on a daily basis.

"I'd say it's harder to balance a sport than it is to balance just homework and a social life," senior and co-captain of the girls' volleyball team Tamara Blue said. "I know with volleyball, I'm here almost 24/7. With school, I just do a couple of hours of homework and then I can go hang out with friends."

Playing high school sports has become such a

large commitment for students that it occasionally takes away from their academic success. However, not all students have as much trouble balancing their homework with their sports' schedules.

"It's not really hard for me because a lot of my friends are through soccer so we help each other out with school stuff, and then once we're done, it's more social," senior and co-captain of the girls' soccer team Kayla Marks said. "So it's not really a problem for me, but for other people it might be."

Sport or no sport, more and more is being expected of high school students, and I cannot help but wonder what it will take for teachers, coaches and parents to realize that enough is enough.

It should not be considered normal for a student to come into school and say that they had a mental breakdown the night before because their stress level was so high. Yet, if a student were to say this, it would not necessarily shock anyone in the school because of how often it occurs.

"We're expected to know exactly what we're going to do when we grow up and what college we're going to by the time we're 16 years old, and that's a lot," Marks said. "We're just getting to the age when our brain is fully developed and how are we supposed to know exactly what we want when people don't have their lives figured out until much later?"

According to The Atlantic, half of all high school students reported doing three or more hours of homework per night, and 26% of students claimed that they had been diagnosed with depression.

The bottom line is something has to change. High school is meant to be an enjoyable experience, and with the amount of work we are expected to complete on a daily basis, we are certainly more stressed than we are cheerful. We cannot constantly juggle more and more responsibilities without losing pieces of ourselves along the way.

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## Is It going to get you, too?

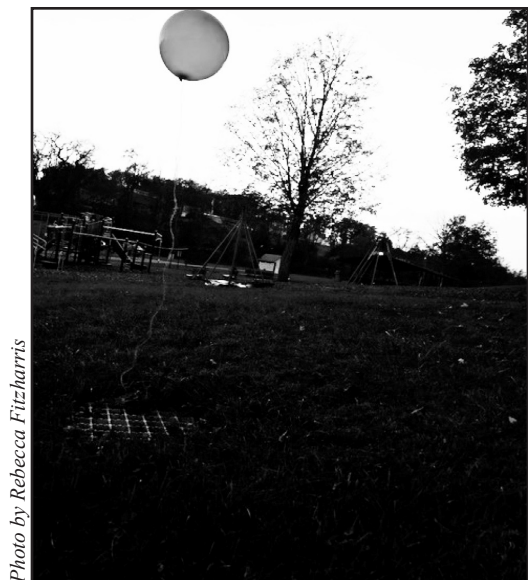


Photo by Rebecca Fitzharris

A red balloon tied to a grate floats alone, resembling the iconic scene in Steven King's *It*.

Steven King's *It* has taken over theaters yet again but this time scarier than ever

Rebecca Fitzharris |  
Arts & Entertainment  
Editor

From new costumes to special effects, audiences are persisting for more Pennywise, The Dancing Clown. The new adaptation on this well-known horror film, *It* has made over \$300 million domestic and over \$600 million worldwide, and is rated 4/5 stars on Common Sense Media.

Many know the story of *It*. A demonic clown terrorizes the town of Derry, ME every 27 years. However, not everyone has seen the new disturbingly scary remake that was released Sept. 8.

The 2017 *It* is the story of seven young outcasts that come together to save their town from a menacing clown, Pennywise. He is an old, shapeshifting creature that feeds every 27 years on the fear of children. With the number of disappearing children growing each day, the outcasts end up facing their own fears to take down the ancient evil.

There have been both good and bad reviews about the remake, and I am here to shed some light on both sides. Let us start with the actors. Many say that the cast list was well-chosen, including actors Finn Wolfhard (Richie), Sophia Lillis (Beverly), Jaeden Lieberher (Bill), Jack Dylan Grazer (Eddie), Wyatt

Oleff (Stanley), Chosen Jacobs (Mike) and, the star of the film, Bill Skarsgård who was casted as Pennywise. The cast brought true horror to the screen and truly felt the characters' fears and emotions. Also, Skarsgård was extraordinarily creepy and embodied Pennywise, a demonic thing that could appear and terrify at any moment throughout the movie.

However, there was a downside with the pop up scare tactic. It often distracts the audience from focusing on the plot of the story. Instead of watching what the characters are doing, you become fixated on preparing yourself for the next surprising moment. Although the audience seems more focused on the terror, the actors do throw in some humor in those moments as relief. In these scenes the actors use their natural talent to make audiences laugh while being simultaneously terrified. With the scary yet funny reactions, these moments make you even more intrigued and entertained throughout the movie.

If you enjoy experiencing terrifyingly, spine tingling moments, then *It* is the right movie for you and remember, "You'll float too."

## Make Up Trends

Does a new season mean new beauty?

Sydney Serena | Opinion Editor



Photo by Makalia Morrell

Made up in red lipstick and foundation, junior Makalia Morrell does her makeup to impress.

Do new makeup trends actually bring more outer-beauty? Juniors Megan Hirschfield and Makalia Morrell give their input on the trends of 2017.

Each trend has a different style such as squiggly eyebrows, braided eyebrows, two-toned lips and bright highlight.

"There are the odd trends like squiggly eyebrows that I do not think look that nice, but there's also glitter lids which I think look so cute," Hirschfield said.

In contrast, Morrell thinks that the bright highlight has left the biggest impact on her due to the fact that it goes on her cheekbones and brightens up her face.

Have you ever had trouble deciding which lipstick color to wear? With the two-toned lip trend, you wear two lipsticks at the same time. Hirschfield is partial to the two-toned lips. The matte colors and the nude lipsticks have had the biggest impact on her makeup routine.

"I definitely think the two-toned lips

will still be a trend. It looks great with fall looks," Hirschfield said.

However, Morrell does not believe this trend will last long.

"It does not look good on people and it has so many bad reviews," Morrell said.

Over the past few weeks, there has been a big debate in social media about braided eyebrows. Should the braided eyebrows be kept in style or let go? Eyebrows braided, crazy concept, I know.

"I personally do not like the braided eyebrows," Morrell said. "I believe your eyebrows should be the way they are and should not be touched. I also think the braided eyebrows are ugly and have no real effect on the beauty of the face."

I agree with Morrell. The braided eyebrows look awkward on a person's face. I believe eyebrows should be kept natural.

Makeup takes time and effort. With school, after school activities, social media and a social life it can be hard to keep up with the trends. Time management is definitely a major factor to consider when trying these new makeup trends.

"I just do not have enough time in a day to follow up with every trend that comes out," Morrell said.

Makeup is just another thing that takes up time and energy. You do not need makeup to survive and most of the time it does not change you. Makeup is just another stipulation that society has put on women. With or without makeup everyone is beautiful. Why cover the face you were born with?

I know that makeup can have a huge impact on your appearance; however, it changes you. It makes you look like someone you are not.

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## Can't Stop the Rise Senior Tamara Blue is a player to watch on the girls' volleyball team

Macailla Ziolkowski | *Managing Editor*

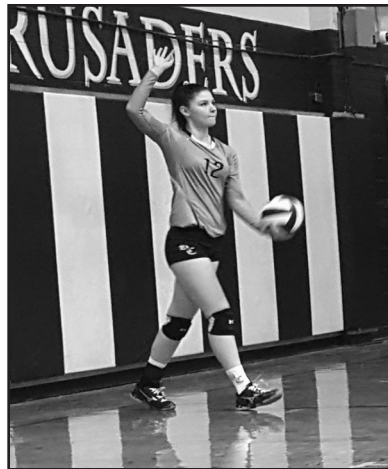


Photo by Macailla Ziolkowski

Tamara Blue practices her serve before the start of the senior night match.

The school is known for sports such as football and basketball, but recently girls' volleyball has been making its way to the top, winning four WPIAL and state championships since 2013. As of Nov. 7 the team was 18-7 overall and 14-0 in section play. On Nov. 4 the team secured another WPIAL title and will move on to the State Playoffs. Students and players are hopeful that the team will go far and have another great end to the season.

Senior Tamara Blue has been a member of the team since her freshman year and she is one of the four team captains. Blue's goals when it comes to volleyball are to work well with others and to learn teamwork.

Last season she was named 2nd team All-Section and 3rd team all WPIAL Class A Championships. This season Blue is working on beating several personal records. She has decided that if a college offers her a scholarship for volleyball and has her major, she will gladly accept it and would be more than happy to continue playing the game.

Blue is also a 3-year starter on the softball team. She is an active member of Kairos, Circle of Friends, Science Club, Junior Achievement, Crusaders for Social Justice and the Yearbook staff as well.

"Volleyball has a team bond that I personally love and the players and coaches care about you so much," Blue said.

When asked about her strategy to staying focused during the game, Blue said, "Keep calm and control the ball."

Sports come with teamwork and Blue found a sport that has plenty of it. Please come out and support the Crusaders as they finish their season.

## Girls' Soccer Kicked its Way to the Top of the Section

The team had one of its best starts in recent history

Matt Colantonio | *Business Manager*



Photo by William Sargent

Junior Caroline Colantonio, the team's leading scorer with 19 goals, attempts a corner kick in a 4-0 victory over Geibel Catholic High School.

There was a bitter taste in the mouth of the girls' soccer team last fall after a blowout loss to Shady Side Academy in the playoffs.

"Everyone felt like we could have done better, individually and as a team," senior captain Maddie Walter said. "The feeling just motivated us for the next season."

And motivate it did. The team came into camp this summer with a new attitude, new motivation and a new head coach, Patrick Egan.

"Coach Egan has done a great job of learning everyone's strengths and weaknesses," Walter said. "He has created a formation which plays to our advantage."

New coaches can be a motivator for a team, and the new vibe has certainly translated to the field. The lady Crusaders finished with a 10-5-1 record and were a real force in Class A Section 3 all year. Much of this success can also be attributed to teamwork.

"Whether it was by their effort at practice, passing to a teammate in a game, telling a joke, playing defense or cheering

for other players in a game, this has been a complete team success," Egan said.

Walter echoed Egan's message. "Everyone contributed, and that is what made this team successful and fun."

Egan also stated that there was a definite emphasis on defense during camp and in practice. The girls certainly applied those skills to games, giving up just 18 goals while scoring 48 for themselves. Egan also stressed that "great defense and commitment to working together on the field" were key to the team sustaining success throughout the season.

Before they reached the playoffs, there were some obstacles facing the team. The biggest, according to coach Egan, were injuries and fatigue.

"The season has a high number of games (19) in a short period of time (eight weeks) so we really need to make sure we are working to balance playing time as much as possible," Egan said.

The team handled adversity successfully this season by finishing near the top of the section and starting Egan's career on the right foot.



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## Day Away #1

House Captains prepare the school for a year of fun and friendly competition

Brianna Caridi | News Editor



Kostka House captain and senior Olivia Clark leads the students of Kostka House in a fun icebreaker.

Days Away have remained a tradition that boost school spirit and unity. On Day Away #1, this school spirit was ever present. With the House Captains creating a day focused on care of the whole person, the entire student body found out what Cura Personalis truly means. In past years, the themes for the four Days Away throughout the year have always been different. This year, the theme is staying consistent.

"This year it was decided at the student leadership retreat that the overall theme of the Days Away would be Cura Personalis," history teacher Dale Checketts said. "As a result, the Days Away will all be focused on the care of the whole person. We will have different topics on personal wellbeing such as mental health, nutrition, the opioid epidemic, being proud of who you are and more."

Previously, Days Away were planned by Student Government and Crusaders for Justice. However, this year, Checketts and the House Captains are in charge of planning the events.

On Day Away #1, the focus was on getting to know the charity of the year, the Jubilee Soup Kitchen. Board member Daniel Stitt spoke to the student body about his experiences as a project engineer for the Massaro Corporation and as a frequent volunteer at the Jubilee Soup Kitchen.

Beyond getting to know the charity of the year, Days Away always involve some bonding time between the different grade levels within the individual houses and, of course, some fun activities.

For freshmen and as a review for upperclassmen, information was given to the

Houses on what exactly the House System is meant to accomplish. This included learning what each House symbolizes and learning about the Jesuits from whom the Houses get their names.

The Houses also met with their House Captains, a new tradition that was started this year, to hear about the Captains' plans to boost House pride and their ideas to raise money for the Jubilee Soup Kitchen.

Houses also faced-off in a friendly game of capture the flag. This allowed the students to get outside, exercise and interact with each other on a competitive level.

"I had a great time playing capture the flag," senior Marissa Pekular said. "Even though Faber House didn't come out on top, it was nice to get outside and blow off some steam."

The Houses participated in a student favorite as well: homeroom decorating. This year, students began getting their homerooms ready for Halloween and the Fall Festival by putting up spooky décor.

The day concluded with a celebration of Mass and the Junior Ring Ceremony, which celebrates the juniors for achieving upperclassmen status. Father Brian Noel also blessed the juniors' class rings.

With Cura Personalis as the theme for all of the Days Away, students will have the ability to focus on themselves for an entire year. The Days Away planned for this year hope to keep students excited, proud and united as a school.

"I know that we have some exciting ideas that your classmates would like to include in the Days Away," Checketts said. "I look forward to working alongside them in this endeavor."

## The Future is Bright with Mr. Light

The Marching Crusaders start the year with a new band director

Matt Colantonio | Business Manager

It is a cool Friday night at Dormont Stadium. "On Crusaders" plays as the student section cheers and the football team plays.

It is a commonly accepted fact that The Marching Band is a major part of the high school football experience and, too often, something that is taken for granted. Due to these facts, it is entirely appropriate to shed light on this year's group of Marching Crusaders.

Throughout the summer, many students heard of a few staff changes for the 2017-18 school year, one being the departure of music teacher and band director Kevin Johnson. What many students did not know is that Johnson's successor would not be hired until days before the most important week of band preparation, band camp.

New band director Alex Light was not sure what he was walking into when he joined the Marching Crusaders. He was not familiar with the sound of the band, the number of participants and had only a few weeks to prepare them for opening week. To learn a little bit more about the band, Light turned to YouTube where he watched past halftime shows to initially get a feel for the sound of the band.

"If it weren't for social media I would have been lost," Light said. "My plan on Monday [the week of band camp] was to find out what was going on and that night start working on the drill."

That first week was chaotic for Light as he worked on adding elements to the performance, learning new music every night and getting to know his new students. At the same time his students were getting

to know him.

"Mr. Light has brought in a fresh new face with lots of energy and enthusiasm that has given the band something to be excited about," senior drum major Richard Bochicchio said. "He has also given the band a huge jolt of energy and excitement which allows us to sound better than ever."

Excitement is a main theme around this year's Marching Crusaders. In fact, when asked about their thoughts on the upcoming year many students simply replied by saying, "The future is bright with Mr. Light."

Part of what has made the transition from Johnson to Light so seamless is a group

**"He [Alex Light] has also given the band a huge jolt of energy and excitement which allows us to sound better than ever"**

*Richard Bochicchio, Drum Major*

of seniors that has elevated the performance of the Marching Crusaders this year. There are five senior members of the Marching Crusaders, Jon Knoll, Caleb Destefano,

Bochicchio, Emily Price and Delaney Bird.

"Delaney has done a fantastic job," Light said about the head Crusetette. "She has been such a strong leader both there [as a Crusetette] and in concert choir. Caleb, Richie and Jon have been helping me out the entire way, telling me things they've done in the past and what tradition is here."

The seniors will certainly be missed, but they hope to leave an impact on the younger Crusaders. With the Marching Crusaders' and choir's continued leadership, hard work, middle school outreach and participation in local band festivals, one can certainly say, "The future is bright with Mr. Light."

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