



**MY SPENDS**

- gift for mom
- gas
- new clothes
- phone bill
- gift for dad
- car fee
- toothpaste

**IM SO BROKE!**

**Balancing the Budget**  
Students need to plan ahead  
for their holiday spending  
Pages 6-7

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#### ON THE COVER



Cover photo illustration by Eleanor Bittel & Coy Stutterheim

### ORGANIZATIONS

## Growing in numbers and earning more awards, debate team prepares for final tournaments

By Kale Schwien  
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Compared to last year, the debate team has had a more active season, as they have attended multiple tournaments, earned several awards and gained more experience this fall.

"The team has been phenomenal," coach

Paul English said. "We have 12 members, and all but two of them are doing this for the first time."

So far, the team has attended nine meets: Sterling, Halstead, Great Bend, Hoisington, Abilene, Newton, Manhattan, Buhler and Wichita West.

"Of those nine, five of them were ones that we were eligible to compete for tournament championships, and of those five, we received awards in four," English said.

With a good start, the team is preparing for tough competition in their final tournaments.

The two-speaker team of junior Sofia San Martin and sophomore Alexander Leiker will compete at state debate on Jan. 17-18 at Garden City. In addition, a four-speaker team, including San Martin and sophomore Joseph Zolnierz on the affirmative and Leiker and sophomore Kaylee Desair on the negative, will try to qualify for state on Dec. 21 at regionals.

"I joined debate because my dad did it in high school," Leiker said. "He recommended it, and so I joined. Debate is good for communication skills, and debate is extremely important; it's how our country's lawmakers make decisions regarding how our lives go."

In addition, the team attended a national qualifying tournament on Dec. 14 at Great

Bend, for which results were not available at press time. Sixteen

teams from schools in the West Kansas District of the National Speech and Debate Association competed for one spot at the national tournament in May in Chicago.

No matter how they finish, English said he is proud of the team and is looking forward to the future of the program.

"Every team has gotten better as the season went on," English said. "Even those partners who struggled at the beginning have found success and found ways to win matches. They have grown as a team and supported each other through the days and weeks leading up to competitions. I am optimistic about the future of the debate team. But, I am excited that we continue in another vein next semester as the forensics team takes over, and our competitive speech and drama season continues to build momentum."



Photo courtesy of Paul English

#### SUCCESSFUL SPEAKERS

Following the Roger Brannan Invitational at Manhattan High School, the Hays debate team celebrates with their third-place trophy on Nov. 9. In addition to placing in Manhattan, the team finished second at Great Bend and Sterling and first at Newton this season.

### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

On Nov. 13, two Hays High School students participated in the Ellis County Youth Entrepreneur Challenge, including sophomore Hannah Strasser and freshman Ryan Ward. After presenting business plans, Strasser earned the Business Most Likely to Launch award and won \$200.



sophomore  
Hannah Strasser

#### Why did you want to participate?

"The opportunity was introduced in my Business Essentials class with Mrs. [Shaina] Prough, and it sounded like a good opportunity to really learn what goes into starting a business and a way to meet some new people and local entrepreneurs."

#### What was your business idea for the event?

"My business was called Forget Me Not, and I would make resin memorial pieces. The resin

pieces can preserve just about any item from an important moment in life (wedding, graduation, etc.)."

#### How did you prepare for the event?

"I wrote a couple of paragraphs for an executive description, and I made a presentation, detailing the business, marketing and financials, and I also made some examples of what pieces could look like, along with a trifold poster."

#### How did you feel when you were given that award?

"I was really proud and surprised. There were a lot of really talented people there, and it meant a lot to know what the judges thought of my business, and it made all the work worthwhile."

Reporting by Kennedy Fischer

## TECHNOLOGY

# IPADS VERSUS LAPTOPS

## District and school leaders consider change in devices for students

By Kennedy Fischer  
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Alongside a new building, students will receive new devices for next year. The question is whether those devices will be laptops, like the current Dell personal computers, or iPads, as the district is now considering.

With a schedule for replacing student devices every four years, district technology personnel and high school administrators began discussions about options. From those talks, came the idea of giving students iPads instead of laptops next year, due to costs and upkeep, among other factors.

"It would help with the logistics, inventory and tech support because we would have an infrastructure that's the same across the entire district," principal Shawn Henderson said.

Henderson said discussions about using iPads are in early stages and teachers may be able to test iPads later this spring.

While he said a final decision has not been made, teachers and students have opinions about switching to iPads.

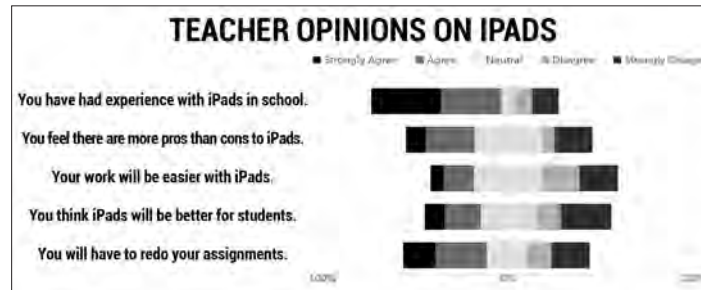
As for the benefits, some teachers surveyed said they think iPads will allow for easier monitoring through Apple School.

"The iPads offer many more options to improve supervision and limitations of what students can do on their device," school psychologist Nichole Lind said. "This will hopefully help to increase student engagement."

Other benefits, teachers say, include that iPads are smaller and lighter for students to carry and that iPads are quicker to start, as opposed to the laptops taking time to boot and to load.

Students agree that iPads would be easier to carry around, would be quicker to start up and would be a device more of them are familiar with, as Hays Middle School uses iPad devices.

"iPads are faster and more portable, but computers have more variety," sophomore Juliet Gross said. "Some tasks are better suited for one over the other. Personally, I think iPads are convenient and faster, but both have their advantages."



Information based on survey responses of 30 teachers

While there may be benefits, there are also concerns.

Many teachers said that they are extremely concerned about preparing students for the future. For example, at the six Kansas Regents universities, none recommend iPads. Fort Hays State University says, "Chromebooks and iPads are not recommended for use as your primary device due to

limited functionality." And, Emporia State University states, "Don't get an iPad or a Chromebook. We love iPad, but from a college-use perspective there are some things that may not work. Both are great companion devices, but you'll want a laptop that runs Windows 11 or MacOS as your primary device."

"I have spoken with adults in a variety of industries in our community, and they all said their business uses Window-based PCs; none use iPads," business teacher Lindsay Hart said. "I have spoken with college students. They all use PCs, no iPads."

Another concern is the issue of iPads not being able to run the software or have the hardware that certain classes need to use. With Hays High being a Microsoft-based school, many teachers also worry all the applications will not be available or run right, or that the district will eventually move away from Microsoft.

"I have spoken with several of our students; they do not want iPads and don't see how they can function in classes," Hart said.

From using iPads in middle school, the main student complaints were about the device size, keyboard and case. Keyboards would sometimes not connect, and since it was not a full keyboard, it was harder for students to type longer essays.

Some teachers and students said they can see the advantages of iPads, but it could be challenging to do schoolwork on an iPad rather than a laptop. In a poll of 328 students, 96 percent were in favor of having laptops versus iPads next year for school.

"I personally think that schools should stick with laptops, as they're what most adults use, and school is to help students prepare for adulthood," junior Braylee Kinderknecht said.

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FINE ARTS

# Young artists participate in Hays Arts Council's annual Winter Art Walk

By Alijah Arias  
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The Winter Art Walk, hosted by the Hays Arts Council (HAC), was the weekend of Dec. 6 in downtown Hays around The Bricks.

Many businesses allowed artists to display their work within the downtown area, and many artists who use different mediums showcased their work in the event, including some Hays High School students. This included students whose submitted work was accepted into the Five State Photography competition, students who participated in the Hays High Art Department's student showcase and other students' independent work, such as senior Alivia Sellens's senior art portfolio.



Photo by Katelyn Willemssen

### CERAMIC COLLECTION

As part of her recent exhibit at the Winter Art Walk Dec. 6, senior Alivia Sellens displays her ceramic mugs. With every personalized mug, Sellens uses "high-fire glazes to create one-of-a-kind works."

Those exhibiting work as part of the Art Department's student showcase were seniors Aliyah Connor, Samara DeWitt, Cason Grezsazek, Bailey Harrell, Catie Schmidt, Haley Sheeley and Keira Vilaysing, juniors Jordyn Flavin, Cristian Luna and Abby Martinez, sophomore Hannah Strasser and freshman Eliana Pineda.

"I had two paintings in the Art Walk," Flavin said. "They were both watercolors. One was a watercolor

landscape painting that I used a reference photo my dad took a few years back. The other painting was just a painting of an avocado."

Sellens, who has had works in the downtown art walk events during all four years of high school, also had her own exhibit at the Ellis County Historical Society. In her recent exhibit, she said she had "mainly ceramics – mostly wheel-thrown but some hand-built as well," and other work.

"I had oil and watercolor paintings, ceramic mugs, prints and even one of my poems I'm most proud of," Sellens said.

The art walk events are opportunities for many artists to get their names and works out to the public and to make an income to continue their work.

"For students, it's an opportunity to have your work displayed, which is not something that we usually get to do outside of the high school," art teacher Grace Splichal said. "For other people, [it is] a chance to see other people's work also displayed and to engage with other artists from the area."

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# Paraprofessionals face challenges in their work within public schools in local, state and national districts

By Justin Houchen  
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Paraeducators, or “paras,” are professionals who “assist with classroom instruction and provide direct services to students, families and the community,” according to the National Education Association (NEA).

Paras in USD 489 are employed by the West Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative (WCKSEC), which “provides special education services to all students who are eligible for special education and gifted services... in the districts of Hays, Ellis, LaCrosse and Victoria.” They employ about 90 paras in these districts; about 38 of those are at Hays High School.

While paras are an integral part of school staffs, the NEA identified four main concerns: sufficient staffing, better pay, professional development and advancement opportunities.

First, in the NEA’s survey of paras from 2022, approximately 64 percent said they were “asked to perform duties outside our job description,” because of a shortage of paras and special education teachers. Within WCKSEC, as of Dec. 9, there were 12 job postings for paras in its area, along with an added posting for substitute paras.

“Being understaffed affects every part of being a para,” para Lynette Dannar, who has worked at Hays High for 11 years, said. “One of the difficulties is struggling to meet all the needs of our students. There is just not enough time in the day. Some days, it feels like I meet myself coming and going, whether it is working with a student, helping with bathroom duties or taking students to classes. It’s a juggling act to make sure students are receiving the correct accommodations. And, unfortunately, there are times students can’t take certain classes because we don’t have the staff to man the class.”

Another main issue is better pay. According to the NEA, the average annual salary was \$28,770, and about 57 percent of paras said they worked another job during the school year. Overall, 75 percent said they did not make a living wage, despite 25 percent having an associate degree, 36 percent having a bachelor’s degree and 14 percent having a master’s degree or higher.

In WCKSEC, para pay starts at \$13.69 hourly, leading some to have other jobs. For example, Dannar also works for a contractor, cleaning Hays High classrooms after school.

In addition, better benefits are also an issue. While paras are scheduled to work six and a half hours per school day, sometimes

they work beyond those hours. Dannar said some work with students from before school when the students arrive to after school when they leave, and the paras may not be able to take any breaks or lunches without students

in their care due to understaffing.

Other issues are professional development and promotion opportunities. In the NEA survey, about 20 percent were “very satisfied” with continuing education and only about 14 percent were “very satisfied” with advancement opportunities.

“I am in school to be a high school history teacher, and working here has been a great experience,” para Ashley Bloomquist said. “It’ll be nice to have para experience, so I can relate better if or when I have paras of my own one day.”

Despite issues, the NEA says 89 percent of paras planned to remain in education and 59 percent planned to stay in their current job.

“The biggest benefit is seeing the light in a student’s eyes when they master a task they have been working hard on,” Dannar said. “Also, I work with the same students throughout their high school career, and it amazes me to see the huge strides they make by graduation.”

**“Being understaffed affects every part of being a para... It’s a juggling act to make sure students are receiving the correct accommodations.”**  
 para Lynette Dannar



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## Facts About Holiday Overconsumption



### Americans Who Receive Unwanted Gifts



Information from Center for Global Development, Environmental Protection Agency & National Environmental Education Foundation; photos from Adobe Stock

# Mindful & Merry

By Delia Dixon  
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The season of overspending has arrived! Gift giving can be a challenge, especially for high school students who already struggle with their spending habits, especially on a generally limited income.

“Forming good spending and saving habits now will help students develop those habits that will last them into adulthood,” business teacher Shaina Prough said. “It’s better to sacrifice and learn to give, save and spend now when students have more limited resources so that those financial habits are developed when students have more spending power in the form of higher incomes.”

### Make a Budget

Determine your monthly income and organize your expenses. Your expenses could include necessities, savings and extras. For December, also incorporate a separate category for holiday spending. This may mean reducing spending amounts in other categories. For this expense category, set spending limits for each person you buy for and also set aside amounts for holiday decorations, food and other indulgences that you predict you will buy. Divide your income into each category and do not plan to spend more than you make. As you spend money during this holiday season, keep track of how much you are spending. This will ensure you stay aligned with the budget you set up.

“Students need to determine a budget for how much they plan to spend and then stick to it!” Prough said. “Don’t be swayed by ads, social media or influencers. Have a plan!”

### Ignore Outside Influences

Social media is overflowing with content brands, creators and influencers that constantly market products to viewers. According to a 2022 *Frontiers in Psychology* article, advertisements, promotions, sales and shopping environments contribute to increases in one’s impulsive nature, causing greater urges to buy products.

“This is often the case for online consumers constantly browsing social media pages who are often exposed to promotion and heavily customized advertising materials,” the article stated.

Teenagers need to build good spending habits and avoid overconsumption during the holiday season

Furthermore, influencers who curate extremely glamorous depictions of their lives for their followers often flaunt materialistic items, therefore, “influencing” others to buy these items. Owning such items (shoes, clothing, accessories, technology, etc.) has led many buyers to view them as a type of status symbol, further influencing unnecessary purchases.

“Teens are easily influenced by social media as well as their peers,” Prough said. “Ignoring those outside influences and sticking to a plan will help students stay on course and not overspend.”

### Take Advantage of Sales

Prough also discussed how students can optimize their holiday spending by watching for discounts on the items they plan to buy. This is when planning ahead provides an advantage. Many companies participate in holiday discounts, starting as early as October and November, with the most notable sales occurring on Black Friday. However, if students miss out on these sales, discounts begin to appear once more as Christmas gets closer. Sales are a way that people can cut back on their spending without significant sacrifices.

### Start Saving Early

While this may be harder to apply now, this can be a helpful tip for next Christmas. By setting aside a certain sum of your money for each month, your holiday savings will grow larger as Christmas approaches. This allows you to obtain an adequate amount of money for holiday spending later without dramatically reducing your regular purchases each month.

### Look for Ways to Cut Expenses

If you are concerned about your holiday funds, look for ways you can reduce spending this season. For example, think of costly traditions that you may have (i.e. gifting yourself presents or splurging on treats). Reconsider these traditions to allow yourself more spending flexibility. Doing this can also help reduce impulsive buying.

When it comes to gifting presents, opt for homemade gifts that will require less money. It is also acceptable to skip the numerous gift exchanges that can drain your bank account. Furthermore, do not let guilt push you to buy presents for every distant family member and acquaintance.

## Gift Ideas That Can Reduce Your Christmas Consumption



### Classes/Workshops

- Art/pottery classes
- Cooking classes
- Gym memberships

### Donations in Their Name

Choose a cause this person cares about and donate a sum of money in their name to an organization with this cause

### Experiences

- Ballet tickets
- Comedy shows
- Concert tickets
- Event tickets
- Musical performances
- Museum admission
- Sporting events



### Homemade Gifts

- Artwork
- Baked goods
- Knitted items
- Painted pottery
- Photo collages



### Plants

Plants have been shown to help reduce stress and anxiety, according to *Psychology Today*. They can also be used as décor, and some can also improve air quality.



### Self-Care

- Manicure/pedicure appointments/gift cards
- Massage appointments/gift cards
- Spa appointments/gift cards

### Subscriptions

- Music apps (Amazon Music, Apple Music, Spotify, etc.)
- Video apps (Disney+, Hulu, Netflix, Prime Video, etc.)

### Thrifted Items

- Accessories
- Books
- CDs
- Clothing
- Kitchenware
- Vinyl records
- Vintage items



### Time

- Babysitting their children
- Cleaning their house/room
- Cooking them a meal
- Doing their yardwork
- Hosting game nights
- Offering lessons for an activity or a skill
- Providing tutoring in a subject



## Praises

- Thriftmas
- Carbonation
- Bitmoji holiday outfits
- Getting paid A LOT
- Winter Wars
- Sootcase
- Snow
- BREAK!

## Protests

- Finals week
- Consumerism
- Rooms app
- Hey Dudes
- Being sick
- Black ice
- Stuffing
- FAFSA

## Staff Playlist

- Alijah Arias**  
"Christmas Tree Farm"  
by Taylor Swift
- Reagan Bates**  
"Happy Xmas (War Is Over)"  
by John Lennon & Yoko Ono
- Eleanor Bittel**  
"Mele Kalikimaka"  
by Bing Crosby & The Andrew Sisters
- Hank Corsair**  
"Little Drummer Boy"  
by Pentatonix
- Delia Dixon**  
"Last Christmas"  
by Wham!
- Kennedi Fischer**  
"Merry Christmas, Please Don't Call"  
by Bleacher
- Justin Houchen**  
"Flooding The Block With Snow"  
by G-Rome
- Kale Schwein**  
"Lights"  
by Hybrid Minds
- Brayden Staley-Herman**  
"Carol of the Bells"  
by Lindsey Stirling
- Coy Stutterheim**  
"Jingle Bell Rock"  
by Bobby Helms
- Clare Tholstrup**  
"When Love Is Gone"  
by Martina McBride
- Katelyn Willemssen**  
"Sleigh Ride"  
by The Boston Pops Orchestra
- Tavia Wynn-Coffman**  
"Do They Know It's Christmas?"  
by Band Aid
- Jessica Augustine**  
"O Holy Night"  
by Celine Dion



Cartoon by Eleanor Bittel

# Holidays can be sentimental, instead of being materialistic

Waking up early on Christmas morning and ripping the wrapping paper from presents to reveal a shiny toy box filled us, as children, with surprise and joy. As we get older, though, Christmas seems to lose the meaning of the holiday season.

Gift givers seem to be faced with the pressure of trying to find perfect gifts, and buyers are often so focused on trying to get such a memorable gift, that they overlook the true meaning of Christmas.

First, some people have started using apps to make personalized online wish lists for gift-givers to make it easier, as these list apps allow users to specify exact options, down to the specific retail website. However, making a "mandated" list, in part, ruins the surprise of getting gifts on Christmas Day.

Also, the emphasis on sales before Christmas, such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday, have changed the spirit of Christmas, focusing more on buying gifts than being sentimental.

There are ways, however, to return to the true spirit of Christmas.

To start, gifts do not have to focus on materialism. Some people gift experiences instead of materialistic presents, such as tickets to concerts, reservations for dinner or even plans for vacations. While they are not a "usable" item, these gifts leave people with an unforgettable experience instead.

Another way to capture the nostalgia of Christmas is to give handmade gifts, which add the creativity and thoughtfulness that is often lost with store-bought gifts. Handmade items often tell the receiver that the giver spent some time and effort, crafting something personalized for them. Whether it is a homemade batch of cookies or a personalized photo album, these personalized gifts often carry a deeper meaning that is hard to replicate with an item from a store.

And finally, an easy way to bring back the magic of the Christmas season is by implementing traditions with family or friends. Traditions, such as having family dinners, making holiday cookies, looking at lights and doing Secret Santa and White Elephant exchanges, remind us that Christmas is about people and time, not just gifts.

Overall, Christmas is more than the gifts that we give and receive. Focusing less on the materialistic side and more on meaningful experiences and gestures recreates the true spirit of Christmas – the joy that we felt as young children. This Christmas, let's focus on bringing back the simplicity and the love that Christmas captures.

## Opinion of the Guidon Staff

Agree: 13  
Disagree: 0

## The Guidon Staff

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The *Guidon* is a student-produced newsmagazine published to inform and entertain the Hays High community, to record the history of the school and to serve as an educational tool for journalism students. Under the supervision of a faculty adviser, journalism students have the opportunities to inform, investigate, entertain, interpret and evaluate in an open forum – all accepted functions of the traditional free press – and have the responsibilities to provide accurate, fair, objective and truthful coverage. Should unintentional errors in content be made, they will be retracted in the next issue of the school year.

The views expressed here are those of *The Guidon* staff and do not express the opinions of the USD 489 Board of Education, administration, faculty or staff. Advertisements must meet content, deadline and size requirements, and acceptance does not constitute an endorsement from the student staff or by the school district.

The staff welcomes letters to the editor, as long as they are not libelous, an invasion of privacy, obscene or copyright protected. Letters must be signed and must include the writer's name, address and phone number.

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Other policies are available upon request by contacting adviser Jessica Augustine at [jaugustine@usd489.com](mailto:jaugustine@usd489.com).

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# RANDOM THOUGHTS WITH REAGAN

## Columnist returns with new journal entries and a Christmas wish list

**Nov. 21 4:39 p.m.** I just rolled down a hill with my wonderful friend Samara and had the time of my life. After watching the video, I realized I was not going as fast as I thought, but it was fun, nonetheless.

**Nov. 22 10:54 a.m.** I want a parachute.

**Nov. 22 9:12 p.m.** Just watched “Wicked,” and OMG, it was so good! I was a little worried that I wouldn’t like it because I’m not the biggest Ariana Grande fan, but honestly, she and Cynthia Erivo absolutely killed. Definitely read Katelyn Willemssen’s review about it below this column because I just know she’s going to have a really fire review.

**Nov. 23 9:22 a.m.** I just woke up from a dream where, instead of the school making us lunch on the last day before a holiday break, we had a huge potluck. Everyone in the school brought a dish, and all the food looked so delicious. I woke up super hungry, honestly.

**Nov. 24 12:18 a.m.** I love freeze-dried Skittles so much.

**Nov. 24 12:35 a.m.** All I can think about is the video of Barron Trump carrying around a briefcase and calling it his suitcase. The way he says the word “suitcase” tickles my brain in a way that I have never experienced before.

**Nov. 26 p.m.** I love the app Photo Roulette so much. Seeing the most hilarious photos of my pals always makes my day.

**Nov. 26 9:28 p.m.** I’m craving a gingerbread cookie horribly right now.

**Nov. 27 9:52 p.m.** My aunt just said, “Minnie the Mouse,” and my grandpa thought she said, “Minnie the Mouth,” which he assumed to be a rapper. Quite frankly, that was the most hilarious thing I’ve heard all day.

**Nov. 30 11:18 a.m.** Just found out that our car has a camera in the back seat that my mom can use to look at us whilst driving. I am in awe.

**Dec. 3 12:07 p.m.** I just learned that Katelyn is really bad at doing the jump spin for the Utah fit checks. She did

it at least five times and did not land a single one. She’s so beautiful and perfect, though, so I suppose I still love her.

**Dec. 4 11:23 p.m.** My mom just texted me asking for a Christmas list and I, in fact, do not have one yet, so I thought I’d craft a small one here:

1. A sick CD rack (I found some really cool ones on eBay.)
2. CDs: anything by the Beatles, “Ram” by Paul and Linda McCartney, “The Moldy Peaches” (self-titled album), “Mystery Girl” by Roy Orbison, “Duran Duran” (also a self-titled album)
3. Posters for my room (preferably music ones).
4. Cool vintage lamps (I already have one, but I yearn for more.)
5. Snoopy blanket (I also have one of these already, but it’s fall themed, and I need one for all year.)
6. Flat back gold earrings (or any gold jewelry for that matter).
7. Gel nail polish/more nail supplies (running low).
8. I always love a candle.
9. I need a nice perfume currently.
10. Money is always wonderful.



By Reagan Bates  
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## Staff member reviews newly released movie musical ‘Wicked’

Hype around the new movie musical “Wicked,” starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande, has been built up for years, with delays from the pandemic and strikes among actors. But, on Nov. 22, the film finally released.

This first “Wicked” movie is based on just Act I of the musical, giving adequate time for character development and preventing rushed plot lines. The second movie, set to release in November 2025, will be Act II and the finale of the story. With a stellar cast of characters, the film has already become the highest-grossing movie based on a Broadway musical.

With normal and 3D viewing options, a friend and I saw it in 3D the day after it was released. I have always been interested in musical theater and have seen a live performance of the musical, so seeing this film was an experience like no other.

The film follows the story of Elphaba (Erivo) and Glinda (Grande) through their time at Shiz University. Elphaba is a misunderstood “witch” with powers she cannot yet control. All she has wanted is to meet the Wizard of Oz. She finally gets the

chance to go with Glinda to the Emerald City, where the two meet the Wizard but quickly discover he is not really a wizard. So, when Elphaba goes against him and runs through his palace, he sends a city-wide order to destroy her. This is just the beginning of the hatred Elphaba faces in this movie and in the next.

One aspect I enjoyed was the nod to the animals. In the movie, it shows that, when Elphaba was young, she was taken care of primarily by animals, and they were equals. Also, in the first scene where Elphaba originally shows her magic, when the wall comes crashing down, we see a mural of animals that was covered. To me, this makes the animals matter so much more.

Other aspects I enjoyed is how the actors made their characters their own. For example, Erivo said it was her choice for Elphaba to have long black nails and braids as a nod to herself. Additionally, the choreography was done in an excellent

manner that did not distract from what was happening on screen but magnified it beautifully. And, the scenery is marvelous and a bit ridiculous, but create the image “Wicked” fans have known for 20 years.

Overall, this movie made the musical more accessible for all fans. In part, this was because, since this was just Act I, there was time to go into the side plots and foreshadow Act II. This was also partly because the director, Jon M. Chu, knew what he was doing, as he had directed “In the Heights,” another movie musical, starring Anthony Ramos and featuring writer Lin-Manuel Miranda, and he had worked with Stephen Schwartz, the writer of the musical. It was

also amazing to see Schwartz return to the musical that has been a hit since its release on May 28, 2003, in San Francisco, before its Broadway opening on Oct. 30, 2003. It was thrilling to see it be adapted into a movie version for even more people to enjoy.



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## FOOTBALL



Photo courtesy of Lance Krannawitter

## STATE BOUND

After the win over Goddard Eisenhower in the state semifinal game on Nov. 22 in Goddard, the Indian players and coaches celebrate their advancement to the 5A State Championship Game. In their first trip to state, Hays played St. Thomas Aquinas on Nov. 30 in Emporia, falling to the Saints, 35-13.

## Indian football team earns spot in 5A state title game

By Hank Corsair  
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After the Hays High School football team ended the regular season with a loss to Liberal and entered the playoffs as the No. 9 seed, no one gave them a chance to get that far in the post-season.

However, the Indians did not let that bother them, as they got a shutout over Andover, upset Great Bend on the Panthers' home field, pulled off another shutout over Hutchinson and got playoff revenge on Goddard Eisenhower to secure a spot in the 5A State Championship. Although Hays High fell in that game to St. Thomas Aquinas, 35-13, the Indians made history, as the first Hays High football team to earn a spot in the final game.

On the road to their state appearance, there were a lot of challenges, including "transitioning to new defensive and offensive schemes, many new starters on the field and losing our All-State offensive threat [senior quarterback Carter Graham to injury]," head coach Tony Crough said.

But, Crough said that playing a challenging schedule during the season, including games against 6A powerhouses Derby and Manhattan, made them better. He added that he was most impressed with how the team came together late in the season, especially after tough losses, to reach the championship.

"We learned to love each other and play together through the hardest part of the season," Crough said.

The Indians concluded the season with eight players being named All-Western Athletic Conference. First Team included junior running back Holden Lind and sophomore offensive lineman Gus Corsair on offense and senior linebacker Wyatt Kirkpatrick, senior defensive back Cooper Lindenmeyer, senior linebacker Dalton Meyers and sophomore defensive lineman Tanner Geist on defense. Second Team included senior wide receiver Jonathan Cano and junior wide receiver/tight end Parker McGuire on offense.

"I think I did pretty good on stepping up and filling a big role on the defensive side," Meyers said of his senior season.

In addition, the team had multiple All-State selections. Corsair, Kirkpatrick, Lind and Meyers were included on the Sports in Kansas 5A All-State team, and Crough was voted the 5A Coach of the Year. On the Kansas Football Coaches Association 5A All-State team were senior Ian McGuire on offense and Meyers on defense, plus Crough earned 5A Head Coach of the Year, and assistant coach Kip Keeley received 5A Assistant Coach of the Year.

Crough said he hopes that making it as far as the team did will set the tone for future teams, making state appearances the new norm of the program.

While the team will have to fill the spots of departing seniors, Hays High will return 15 of their 22 starters for next season. On offense, Corsair, Lind and junior Jarek Purdy, among others, will return, and on defense, Geist, along with juniors Jaxson Chartier and Caleb Thompson and others, will return.

"My hopes are we will be able to be more aggressive with our hands and feet in order to be successful," Geist said.



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ATHLETE  
SPOTLIGHT

Girls Basketball



senior Molly Martin

After a strong showing at the Hays City Shootout, where she broke a school record, senior Molly Martin will once again look to be a team leader.

**How do you feel about your role on the team?**

"As a senior, I have to be a leader. I've been able to play under great leadership, and I'm lucky to have other great senior leaders by my side."

**What did it feel like to set the career steals record?**

"It felt amazing. I never expected to ever break a record, but it's definitely one of the most rewarding feelings."

**What is your goal this season?**

"Our biggest goal is to go to state, and it would be amazing to do it our senior year together."

**What led you to commit to Ottawa University?**

"The second I visited Ottawa, I knew it was home. The coaches, players and environment just stood out. The program has great energy and fits the way I play."

Reporting by Hank Corsair

## UNIFIED BOWLING

**Young unified bowling team places second at state in its third year as a school sport**By Brayden Herman  
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While bowling is a newer sport to Hays High School, with this being its third year, the unified bowling team made an impact this season, as the team qualified for state and finished as the state runner-up.

Unified bowling, according to the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA), "seeks to promote social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences" among students of all abilities, as they compete against other schools.

To start the season, three Hays teams competed in Great Bend on Oct. 17, earning fourth, sixth and 11th. Then, they played in Garden City, placing second, 11th and 12th, and in Liberal, finishing first, sixth and 14th. At the home meet Nov. 7, two teams Hays competed, with first and second.

"Every single meet, every single one of these kids did better than the last meet, and that is really hard to do in the world of bowling," head coach Richard Hodges said at a pep rally on Nov. 22 at Hays High.

After the regular season, they competed against 12 teams on Nov. 11 at regionals, hosted by Goddard Eisenhower.



Photo courtesy of Lance Krannawitter

**STATE RUNNER-UP**

At the fall sports pep rally Nov. 22, the unified bowling team gathers to be recognized in front of the student body. The team, in its third season as a school sport, placed second at state out of 20 teams with 945 total points.

In order to qualify for the state tournament, they had to place in the Top 5, which they did, as they finished in fifth place with 823 points and earned their second trip ever to state, having qualified also in 2022.

"We were going up against programs that are much more seasoned," Hodges said. "Their coaches are state winners; they have better facilities; they have better equipment; they have a whole lot of things that were stacked against us, and we found a way to beat them."

On the regional team were senior Lucas Miller, juniors Ben Bergman, Tyler Huynh and Meade and sophomores Keaton Brown and Ethan Kuhlmann.

On Nov. 18, the team traveled to West Ridge Lanes in Topeka, where they placed second out of 20 teams.

"It felt good because we kind of were underdogs, and nobody thought we were going to actually do well," Brown said.

Western Athletic Conference teams dominated the top spots, with Great Bend finishing first with 1,110 points; Hays in second with 945 points; Liberal in third with 936; and Garden City in fourth with 857.

"I was so ecstatic when they called Liberal because, at that moment, I knew we had gotten second, and when they called Hays for second, I cried tears of joy," Meade said.

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TRADITIONS

# Sweet Treats

Make these quintessential desserts for the holidays

## Grandma's Butter Cookies

"Every holiday, my grandma would have these cookies fresh out of the oven for all her grandkids to enjoy. They are so warm and buttery; to me, they just taste like home. My daughter recently made a batch of these, and it brought me back to my childhood and all the memories of my grandparents!"  
**social science teacher Luke Lundmark**

### Ingredients

- 4 sticks salted butter
- 2 1/4 cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups flour



### Instructions

- Cream butter and sugar until fluffy.
- Add in eggs and vanilla and mix well.
- Add flour 1 cup at a time and mix until completely combined after each addition.
- Drop by rounded tablespoons onto a baking sheet, two inches apart.
- Bake at 350°F for 12 minutes or until golden brown, then transfer immediately to a flat surface to cool.

## Snowball Cookies

"Every year, my family makes these for our friends and family. It's one of our favorites! It's a cookie, but we coat it with a ton of powdered sugar, so it doesn't look like one."  
**sophomore Jaylen Hughes**

### Ingredients

- 3/4 cup pecan halves or pieces
- 1 cup non-dairy, room-temperature butter
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 1/4 cups gluten-free flour
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 1/4 cups powdered sugar (for rolling)



### Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 300°F and toast pecans for 9-10 minutes. Remove, cool and finely chop in a food processor.
- Cream butter, powdered sugar and vanilla.
- Add flour and salt and mix on low until well combined. Add in pecans and mix.
- Roll into one-inch balls and place them on a baking sheet.
- Bake at 350°F for 11-12 minutes, then let cool for five minutes. Roll in powdered sugar while warm, then let cool. Roll in powdered sugar a second time.

## Great-Grandma's Chocolate Sheet Cake

"This sheet cake has been in my family for generations. It was my great-grandma's signature recipe, and it's been a part of nearly every family gathering – holiday or not. There's something about its simplicity and rich flavor that feels like a warm hug on a plate. Every bite reminds me of sitting around the table, hearing old family stories and laughing until our sides hurt."  
**senior Aryahn Fischer**

### Ingredients (for the cake)

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract



### Ingredients (for the icing)

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 6 tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 4 cups powdered sugar

### Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9x13-inch baking pan.
- In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking soda and salt.
- In a saucepan, melt the butter. Stir in water and cocoa powder. Bring to a boil, then remove from heat.
- Pour the hot cocoa mixture into the dry ingredients and stir until just combined.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, buttermilk and vanilla. Add this to the cake batter and mix until smooth.
- Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean, then remove the cake and let it cool.
- For the icing, in a saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in cocoa powder, milk and vanilla. Cook until smooth and heated through.
- Remove from heat and gradually whisk in the powdered sugar until smooth.
- While the cake is still warm, pour the icing over the top and spread evenly. Let the icing set before serving.

Reporting by Clare Tholstrup & Reagan Bates



## Anticipated Albums

- DMX – "Let Us Pray: Chapter X"
- Mariah Carrey - "Merry Christmas: 30th Anniversary Edition"
- Nicki Minaj – "Pink Friday 2: The Hiatus"
- ROSÉ - "rosie"
- Snoop Dogg & Dr. Dre – "Missionary"



## Future Films

- Dec. 6**
  - "The Order"
  - "The Return"
  - "Werewolves"
  - "Y2K"
- Dec. 13**
  - "The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim"
  - "Trap City"
- Dec. 20**
  - "Mufasa: The Lion King"
  - "Sonic the Hedgehog 3"
- Dec. 25**
  - "A Complete Unknown"
  - "Babygirl"
  - "The Fire Inside"
  - "Nosferatu"



## Witty Wisecracks

- What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?**  
Tinseltitis!
- What do you call a photo taken in the North Pole?**  
A Polar-oid!
- Do snow globes ever get scared?**  
No, but occasionally they get shaken!
- How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?**  
Nothing. It was on the house!
- Why was the Christmas tree so bad at knitting?**  
It always dropped its needles.
- What do you call a bunch of chess players bragging about their games in a hotel lobby?**  
Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer!