

THIS ISSUE

NEWS



ICHS Veterans Day program honors those who served.

SPORTS



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FEATURE



Nurse Jill's heroics are just part of the job.

OPINION



Gap between the treatment of women versus men still a battle.

CALENDAR FEBRUARY

- Feb. 7: Boys' Wrestling Regionals @ Jeffersonville
- Feb. 7: Girls' Swimming/Diving Sectional Finals @ Center Grove
- Feb. 7: Winter Guard Competition @ Westfield
- Feb. 14: Dance Team Competition @ Center Grove
- Feb. 19: Boys' Swimming/Diving Sectional Prelims. @ Franklin
- Feb. 21: Boys' Swimming/Diving Sectional Finals @ Franklin



Athletes Set to Skate onto the World's Biggest Stage in the

2026 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES

MILANO CORTINA 2026



By: GRACIE WERDEN
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

The 18-day long Winter Olympics, which will be held in Milano-Cortina, Italy, will be held February 4 - 22. The most recent Winter Olympics took place four years ago in Beijing, China.

This year's Winter Olympics will mark the 25th edition of the games, meaning there have only been 24 other Winter Olympic Games since

being added this year. Ski mountaineering will make its Olympic debut, featuring both uphill climbing and downhill skiing. Mixed team skeleton is also a new event, allowing one male and one female athlete from each nation to compete together. Winter Olympic events include alpine skiing, biathlon, bobsleigh, cross country-skiing, curling, figure skating, freestyle skiing, luge, ice hockey, snowboarding, Nordic combined, short track speed skating, skeleton, ski jumping, and ski mountaineering.

The Winter Olympic Games are also increasing gender equity by adding more events for women, giving them more opportunities to compete than in the past games.

The Paralympic torch relay will include 501 torchbear-

ers traveling through the region. The relay will begin on March 6, 2026 and end on March 15, 2026. Torchbearers will travel using wheelchairs, planes, and cars to light the



Photo by Rebecca Robertson

The Piazza del Duomo is a center point for the Olympic games.

torches. This relay symbolizes the start of the official games and helps spread the message of the values and the Olympic Movement. This event is typically two weeks after the Olympics.

Some of the top athletes to watch in the 2026 Games are alpine skier Mikaela Shiffrin (USA), along with snowboarder Chloe Kim

(USA). A few others to watch are freestyle skier, Elieen Gu (USA), along with figure skaters, Ilia Malinin (USA) and Kaori Sakamoto (Japan). Some hockey stars include Sydney Crosby (Canada), Sarah Nurse (Canada), and Connor McDavid (Canada). Other notable athletes include speedskater Jennings de Boo (Netherlands) and bobsledder Kaillie Humphries (USA).

The motto for the Milano-Cortina Olympics is, "It's Your Vibe". This allows everyone to bring their own energy and their passion to the games and highlights that everyone has their own story.



Photo by Rebecca Robertson

Tourists in Milan, Italy are welcomed by Olympic lights.



Photo by Rebecca Robertson

Buildings around the Piazza del Duomo welcome Olympic athletes and fans.

they first began in 1924. This will be Italy's first time hosting since 2006.

There are 16 sports included in the Winter Olympics with some new events

IC Winter Guard is Ready for a Competitive Journey

By: ARIANNA MITCHELL
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

Indian Creek's 16-member winter guard has six competitions this season, all at different schools. The guard has been practicing very hard for their upcoming competition season.

Creek will travel to Franklin Central for their first competition. Coaches Chelsea Chapman and Taylor Abbott are excited to see everyone on the team



Team members are dressed and ready to perform.

collaborate to make a great show this season. They are also excited to see how the new team members grow and progress.

Senior Savannah Deckard is excited because it's her last

season, and she is looking forward to growing with the team one last time. Deckard says, "I want to make the most of every rehearsal and performance." She says that she is proud of everything

she has accomplished in her five seasons being part of winter guard.

Senior Liv Petro is excited to perform a "happy and cute show after two years of more series shows."

The guard agrees that they are looking forward to their upcoming competitions.



Team members work together to put on a great show.



Senior Liv Petro performs in a recent competition.

Veteran's Day Program Breeds Respect

By: MAGGIE SMITH
CREEK CURRENT NEWS EDITOR

Every year Indian Creek Middle and High school hosts a Veteran's Day program in the high school gym. This program invites local veterans to join them to honor their service to the country. This event draws a lot of attention and attendance from those veterans.

During this program, the middle school and high school bands and choirs play, a soldier and the principals deliver speeches, and in past years, even students have spoken.

A highlight of the program is when the bands play each branch of the military's

song while Mr. Skobel asks that group of Veterans to stand while their song plays.

Every veteran is also honored by name, branch, years of service, and awards named while she/he stands to applause.

At the end of the program the veterans are invited to join a lunch served by the middle school student council with help from the IC FFA, who cooks up their famous pork chops.

This event is beloved by the community and the school with a lot of members of both speaking about how much they enjoy the program. Mr. Skobel, the high school principal, says,

"I think Veterans Day is such an important tradition for our school and community. It gives us a chance to honor those who have served and sacrificed for our country, while also passing along the values that make our small-town community so special — gratitude, respect, and service. It's one of those events that truly connects our students to something bigger than themselves and reminds us all what it means to be part of Indian Creek."

This program helps to connect our students to our community in a way nothing else does. It really is a very special day around here."

This program helps to teach the students about all

that veterans do for the country. Many teachers, students, and community members express their wishes for it to go on for many years to come.



By MAGGIE SMITH
News Editor

Confronting Stigma

In the recent years, there have been more conversations focused on mental health. The positive side of this is that it's helped to reduce the stigma around common mental illnesses such as depression.

However, with depression and anxiety struggles being glamorized, it really starts to undermine people who are actually struggling.

More serious mental illnesses are still heavily stigmatized. Things like schizophrenia and BPD are still seen as something to be embarrassed about. There is little education given about these illnesses and that breeds fear. When someone has an unstable illness that makes them lose touch with reality, people who do not understand the illness will just write them off as 'crazy,' and most of the time no one tries to understand that the illness is not their fault.

Throughout history mental disorders have been wildly misunderstood and mistreated. Historically, mental institutions were known to have inhumane conditions. Today, psych wards have a lot better conditions but oftentimes they are critically understaffed and overcrowded. There needs to be more coverage for these problems, because just because someone has an illness does not mean they should be hidden away from society.

Mental health professionals also need more safety precautions and better pay. Mental health professionals are often attacked by patients and have no real protection set in place by the hospitals to stop it.

Mental illnesses are nothing to be ashamed of, and as a society we need to make resources more readily available and help to reduce the stigma and embarrassment associated with them.

Homework Hustle Has Both Pros and Cons for Students

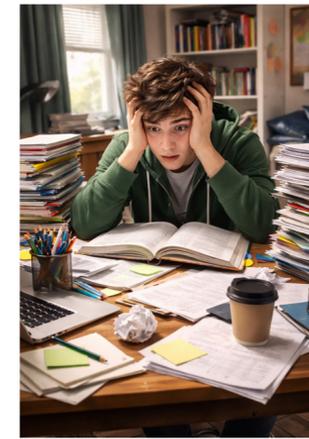
By ALICIN PERRY
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

The word "homework" itself can evoke groans from students of all ages. Is it a necessary tool for reinforcing classroom instruction or an outdated practice that robs children of valuable free time?

For years, educators, parents, and students have all debated the value and drawbacks of assigning homework. While some argue that it fosters responsibility and independent study skills, the thought that homework often places undue stress on students, infringes upon their personal lives, and ultimately fails to achieve its intended educational goal tends to outweigh other opinions of homework.

IC teacher, Mrs. Smith, says, "While homework can be good for students to gain additional practice and to provide that school-to-home connection, I am not a fan of large amounts of homework. Students are in school all day, and many of them have extracurricular activities or jobs at night, so having a workload on top of that is just very difficult."

Homework is often assigned with the intention of reinforcing classroom lessons and creating a link between school and home learning environments. While it can be beneficial for students to gain additional practice, excessive amounts of homework can be detrimental.



Students spend a significant portion of the day in school, and many also have other things they tend to do once school lets out for the day. Adding a heavy workload on

top of these commitments can create stress and reduce the time available for rest, family, and interests.

IC teacher, Mrs. Atkins, says, "Homework is important for practice. It is essential for learning, but must be intentional and in moderation." Homework is often seen as a need for classroom learning, providing students with chances to reinforce concepts and skills outside of the classroom. The importance of homework lies in its potential to deepen understanding through practice and application. However, the overall key to the effectiveness of homework is intentionality and moderation. Assignments should be carefully

designed to serve a clear educational purpose, and the quantity of the work should be reasonable, ensuring that students have the time for other essentials such as rest, play, and family time.

While homework serves a valuable purpose in reinforcing classroom learning and promoting independent study habits, it is essential to strike a balance. The key lies in assigning meaningful, well designed tasks that are moderate in length and aligned with learning objectives. By prioritizing quality over quantity, educators can ensure that homework remains a tool for enhancing student understanding and fostering a love of learning, rather than becoming a source of stress and frustration.

IC Students Serve Up Sweets at New Ice Cream Shop

By: SAVANNAH BERTRAM
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

Last summer Dobbies Ice Cream opened next to Butter Sugar Flour in Trafalgar.

Dobbies Ice Cream welcomes churches, meetings, and non-profit meetings.

ICHS has some students who work at Dobbies Ice Cream like Natalie Griffin and Noelle Bolin.

Griffin says that Dobbies has a very small town feel, is customer driven and always has kind service and good pricing, while Bolin states

that Dobbies can be very busy on weekends or after football games.

The owner, Lesa Arnold, really wanted an ice cream place in Trafalgar for everyone to enjoy.

Teacher, Christie Smith, says that Lesa Arnold has been kind enough to donate money and gift cards to ICHS.

Shop employees take pride in keeping the business well kept, organized, and clean. They also seek to ensure every customer is happy with their experience.

Dobbies' menu is filled

with many options like malts and shakes, a variety of ice cream flavors, and hot dogs. A favorite hot dog, the Boss Dog has peanut butter and relishes on it. Dobbie's best selling ice cream is Brown Butter Bourbon Truffle.

The community and IC students are excited for Dobbies to reopen in spring.



Dog Park, Community Garden Open in Prince's Lakes

By: ELISE GIGER
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

Prince's Lakes residents are excited about a new dog park that was added to the town in May. The Prince's Lakes Park Board came

together with the community to create a dog park. Many donations helped the dog park become possible.

In addition to the dog park, Prince's Lakes opened

a new community garden. It has garden plots or raised garden beds that can be rented. Water is provided at the garden, but tools are not.

The garden is for people

who don't have a garden at their house. Residents in the area are welcome and encouraged to rent a plot. Expectations are that the plot is kept tidy and weed-free.



South Grove Eye Care

IC Middle and High Schools Welcome Miss Ulrich to Ag Department

By: CLAIRE SMITH
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

This year, Indian Creek is welcoming Miss Ulrich to

their agriculture program. Ulrich grew up in Columbus, where she started out raising horses and later worked with cattle and sheep. She says those experiences really sparked her love for agriculture.

Ulrich says that her favorite FFA discovery activity from her high school days was horse and pony judging. "I've always looked up to Indian Creek as an FFA chapter," Ulrich shared. "Even when I was in high school, Indian

Creek was always in my mind."

At Indian Creek, Ulrich will be teaching middle and

school agriculture as well as high school agricultural power and fashion. IC students are excited to welcome her

into their community and can't wait to see the impact she makes on their FFA chapter.




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Senior Libby Dowty Claims Her Second State Title

By HANK SEITZINGER, ISAAC SMITH, & ABRAM WISEMAN
CREEK CURRENT STAFF REPORTERS

On November 1, 2025 Libby Dowty toed the line to run her fourth consecutive state championship meet. As the clear favorite to win, the nerves were high, but her confidence was higher.

The gun sounded, and off she went. The crowd of other confident runners got out hard, but still without a doubt, Libby was up front. Running like there were no other runners in the race, she took the lead and never let off. She kept on the gas, and the gap just got bigger and bigger.

By the third of five kilometers she had at least a five

second lead. Not showing a sign of weakness, she kept pushing, proving that she is the best runner in the state.

Taking the last turn into the long finishing stretch there was no doubt that Libby was going to cross the line in first place. With her signature strong finish, she kept pushing and humbly crossed the finish line in first place, solidifying, once again, that she is the fastest runner in the state.

During the post-race interview, the reporter asked, "Libby what does it mean to you to win as a sophomore, then not win last year, and then come back and win as a senior?" Libby responded with, "It's pretty incredible, God has taught me a lot

through my loss, and it made me stronger, and a better person. I'm glad I just got to come out run again and have the opportunity to win again, all glory to God. It's all through him who gave me strength."

Libby's two state cross country titles are IC's only in that sport. Former Creek runner turned coach, Brady Devine, helped Dowty to both championships. Devine said, "Libby Dowty has been a joy to coach for a variety of reasons. She is incredibly coachable, tough, and disciplined with her training. She has never tried to take a shortcut and works relentlessly to improve every day. Winning an individual state title in cross country is very



Libby Dowty shows her champion medal on the stage of LaVern Gibson Championship Cross Country Course after securing her second XC title.

difficult, as there is only one champion in the entire sport in Indiana. Winning two is even more impressive and puts her in some elite company with just a couple other girls in Indiana history."

A SWINGING START



By CHLOE MCGUINNESS
Sports Editor

The End of an Era

Under the fading stadium lights on a November Friday night, the senior football players walked off the field for the final time, cleats cutting through the cold turf as the scoreboard turned off, marking the end of a long, hard-fought season. Though the team's run ended with a regional loss, the night was far from a defeat. For many, it was a celebration of everything they had built together.

A sectional championship, countless practices, and a brotherhood that will outlast any playoff bracket. The sectional title the team captured one week earlier had been their spark, a moment that lifted the entire school. Fans rushed the field, teammates embraced, and the players who had worn the red, white and blue since freshman year, stood at the center of it all. All the work, all the years, it finally showed.

Regionals brought tougher competition and a bittersweet ending, but Indian Creek's performance remained steady. Coaches praised their discipline, their voice in the huddle, and the quiet confidence they brought to younger players. For the first time since 2011, Indian Creek has won sectionals. These boys put their blood sweat and tears into this field. As the final whistle blew that Friday, the senior boys didn't rush off the field. Instead, they stood for a moment, helmet in hand, taking in the crowd, the cheerleaders, and the teammates who have become family. It wasn't the ending they dreamed of, but it was one the boys could be proud of. Losing hurts but I'm sure they wouldn't trade the bond they have gained for the world. These boys won sectionals, they fought to the end, and got to finish it with the people they love. A chapter closes, but the legacy the seniors leave behind will echo long after the season ends.

Sophomore Levi McFann Has a Sport for Every Season

By: WALKER OLIVER
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

IC sophomore Levi McFann is a three-sport athlete who plays football in the fall, basketball in the winter, and baseball in the spring.

McFann, who plays linebacker during football season, states that, "Out of all three sports I play, football is my favorite, and even though I have only played for nine years, it is still the sport I

enjoy the most."

McFann was one of the four players starting at linebacker for the Braves during this sectional-championship season.

When the Braves played Covenant Christian, McFann recorded one interception.

During the winter season, McFann plays the forward position in basketball. McFann says that he has been playing basketball for eleven years and enjoys being

around the teammates that he can call his friends.

He was looking forward to this season as a sophomore, but unfortunately is now watching from the sidelines following a football injury that led to surgery.

Last year on junior varsity, McFann averaged 4.8 points and 5.3 rebounds per game.

The final sport that McFann plays is baseball. When the spring season comes around, McFann says, "I am

always excited for baseball season especially since this will be my thirteenth year of playing baseball."

This past baseball season, McFann played mostly JV as third basemen and pitcher. In the past, McFann has also played travel baseball so that he can improve for high school baseball each spring. Now he is looking forward to healing from his surgery and getting ready for his upcoming years as an IC athlete.



McFann waits on the sidelines, ready for the next play.

Some Students Choose Out-of-School Sports

By: ELISE GIGER
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

School sports are something a lot of students do, but there are many athletes who prefer out-of-school sports.

Studies show that being in school sports can lead to better academic performance, physical health, and time management skills.

However, studies also say that being in a school sport can lead to pressure, increase stress, and could potentially have a negative effect on the

athletic performance of a student.

IC sophomore Keaveny Hayworth said, "Out-of-school sports are better than in-school sports because you don't rely on anything from school affecting your ability to play in the sports like grades. In out-of-school sports, there are also a lot more opportunities."

Out-of-school sports can help students have a higher GPA and graduation rates. They can also be benefi-

cial for flexibility in their training, which would allow students to balance academics. Being in out-of-school sports really helps with time management with school, practice, and homework and helps students become independent.

However, out-of-school sports can be very expensive. Sports are expensive in general, but out-of-school sports are way more expensive than in-school sports. IC sophomore Jessie Hallet

expressed her opinion about the expenses of being in out-of-school sports. "Out of school sports are expensive for me. Volleyball is expensive for private lessons, travel expenses, uniforms, gear, and club fees."

The reason out-of-school sports cost so much than school sports is because of traveling fees, uniforms, shoes, gear, rentals, coaching, etc. and the fact that school sports are mostly funded by the school.

Phaehler and Grayson Taylor. Sophomore Cecilia Hale said that she has been diving since sixth grade and said that the most important thing is when starting to dive is "Having fun and not stressing too much is essential." Hale is confident and believes

that the team will be winning more meets this year.

As the season begins, the team will progress and grow as the fierce athletes are put to the test. As they dive headfirst into the new season, they will be hoping for encouragement from the fans.

Diving Team Makes a Splash; Looks to Return to State

By ADRIANA WEST
CREEK CURRENT OPINION EDITOR

IC's diving team is preparing for a season full of hard work and dedication. Athletes work on their flexibility and techniques to hopefully place in nationals. With the help of returning divers and

fresh blood, the team is eager for this season. All the practices prepare the team for meets in order to showcase the commitment and talent that the swimmers and divers have attained.

Last season produced two dive state qualifiers, Alex

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Mental Health is Important in Long Run

By: AUBREY LINDSAY
CREEK CURRENT REPORTER

According to statistics, almost 8,000,000 United States students participate in high school athletics and only a handful turn professional in their sports. With so many trying to be in that one percent, it begs the question: What will happen to those students' bodies and minds?

To start off, what are the benefits of sports? Obvious ones are teamwork, muscle strengthening, and confidence building. Additionally, some underlying, less noticeable ones are: reducing risk of diseases, emotional regulation, and bone density.

So, where do the problems arise? Sometimes, the

problems don't come from sports themselves, but rather the pressure into sports by friends/family. If athletes push themselves to do their best and fail at one little thing, they can completely lose faith in themselves, which may lead to devastation.

Just because an athlete is physically strong doesn't mean that they don't suffer from mental issues. Everyone goes through their own problems at some point in their life. Currently the medical field and sports organizations have been researching the topic. In 2019, there was a study that said about 35% of professional athletes are struggling with their mental

health. Most of them were continuous burnout, depression, and high levels of anxiety.

Dr. Norman, an Ohio State University psychiatrist for every athlete on campus says, "I think it's really good to see athletes speaking out and encouraging an open and honest discussion. People sometimes forget that student-athletes are people; they can experience anxiety, and they have tremendous pressure on them at such a young age. I tell athletes that mental health treatment is similar to training for their sport. You train for it and work through strategies to improve your overall well-being and athletic performance."

Rosebuds
SALON & SPA

Division Champions Set to Face off in Super Bowl LX



By: WALKER OLIVER & MASON WOODKE
CREEK CURRENT REPORTERS

Super Bowl LX is set to be played on Sunday, February 8, at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California. This game will be between the 16-3 NFC Division Champion Seattle Seahawks and the 17-3 AFC Division Champion New England Patriots.

The Patriots are led by University of North Carolina quarterback Drake Maye. The Seahawks are led by University of Southern California quarterback Sam Darnold.

The Super Bowl will be broadcast on NBC at 6:30 pm, and the halftime show will be performed by Bad Bunny.

QB Maye has been on an absolute tear this year. He

throwing for 4,391 yards and 31 touchdowns with only eight interceptions. He has also run for 450 yards and four touchdowns. Maye is an MVP candidate this year, looking to bring the trophy to Foxborough, Massachusetts.

QB Darnold has had a different path to the Super Bowl. He has been in the NFL for eight years on five different teams in that time. Darnold has had a great year this year throwing for 4,048 yards and 25 touchdowns. Seattle also has the favorite for the offensive player of the year, wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba.

The spread prediction is Seattle - 4.5 points. With such close odds, Super Bowl LX is sure to attract a lot of excited viewers.

Indian Creek's Unsung Hero is Brought to Light

By LEVI DICKENS
CREEK CURRENT STAFF REPORTER

In almost every aspect of life, whether in sports, towns, and history, there are always unsung heroes, and the same could be said for Indian Creek High School. While teachers rightly get the attention they deserve for teaching future generations and students, it also leaves many other staff in the school doing duties to help that often either go unnoticed or unappreciated, whether it be janitors, faculty staff, or nurses.



She has worked at IC for six years, and in those six years she has experienced many things, from the Covid outbreak of 2020 to the growth of IC itself as more families arrive in Trafalgar. And through it all, through injuries and sickness, she has been performing her duties to the best she can along with

being involved with the community with examples being the Great Adventure Club.

Nurse Jill's time at IC has been primarily positive. In recent years, Trafalgar itself has been growing, with new stores and houses being built. And with this growth, it is only natural for the school to grow. There have been additions to the high school such as the auditorium and the field house; but despite all that, IC has still managed to be like a small community where everyone knows each other.

Her experiences with

the school have been great, too. She had said the staff is really supportive, making the school feel like home. "We can laugh together, we can cry together," she said.

Overall, Nurse Jill has been a vital component of the school in a position that doesn't get much attention. She has had a great time at IC, helping students stay healthy. She has tended wounds and helped people suffering illness. Indian Creek High School would not be the same without unsung heroes such as Nurse Jill.

THE SPOTLIGHT



By KAYCEE TOWELL
Feature Editor

The Story that isn't Getting Told

Over the years, women have fought battle upon battle to allow our voices to be heard. From getting the right to vote, to just being allowed to speak freely, so why is a workforce dedicated to letting people voice their opinions still silencing women?

Many women have spent years studying and preparing for a career in journalism only to find that men are predominantly in power. While women do have a very large role in journalism, they are still overrun by men. Women play a vital part in reporting, writing, and editing, yet continue to be ignored and outshined.

Former reporter Alicia Towell noticed that there were more men than women employed in the offices where she worked. Towell explained, "There were definitely more men." She also noted that in every journalism office she worked, she was hired by a man.

People may bring up the fact that women have come a long way since then, but have we really?

If a career like journalism is still undermining women to the point where younger generations are noticing, there is a problem.

Women are often expected to work twice as hard just to earn respect from their male peers.

This has to stop; no career should be male or female dominated, especially journalism.

We must be seen. We must be recognized. We must be heard.

I refuse to believe that this is the world we live in. I refuse to believe that journalists who write all kinds of stories won't tell this one.

If they don't want to write our story, then it is up to us to do so.

The Creek Shares Favorite Thanksgiving Foods

By ELISE GIGER
CREEK CURRENT STAFF REPORTER

Thanksgiving is an American holiday where people come together, watch the Macy's Thanksgiving parade, eat delicious food, spend time with family or friends, go to church, or even go to special sporting events.

The question is often posed: "What's your favorite Thanksgiving food?" Altogether, 81 students and staff at ICHS responded to the

question what their favorite Thanksgiving food is and here are their responses:

- Variety of potatoes - 21 votes
- Mac n cheese -15 votes
- Turkey- 8 votes
- Pumpkin pie- 7 votes
- Turkey and noodles - 7 votes
- Stuffing - 5 votes
- Rolls; Ham - 3 votes
- Besides all the food,

Thanksgiving is about being thankful for making it another

year for waking up yet another day and seeing people you love and care about. But what is Thanksgiving truly about? The holiday commemorates a harvest festival celebrated by the Pilgrims in 1621, and is held in the US on the fourth Thursday in November. A similar holiday is held in Canada, usually on the second Monday in October.

Here are some fun Thanksgiving facts: The first

Thanksgiving lasted three days. Jingle Bells was originally a Thanksgiving song. There wasn't any turkey on the first Thanksgiving. Abraham Lincoln made it a national holiday on October 4th, 1863. The Native Americans' and the Pilgrims' favorite Thanksgiving food was corn and beans because it provided a balanced diet and it became a symbol of the harvest season and their shared bounty.

Darker Times are Leading to Darker Moods

By EDIT GUNNARSSON
CREEK CURRENT STAFF REPORTER

Winter means shorter days and longer hours in darkness; but does this affect humans at all? The answer to that is yes, it does, but it can be felt in different ways. Some people may feel more calm and just enjoy holiday times and being cozy, while others may feel anxiety and feeling down and tired.

Researchers have found a pattern in moods when seasons change and it's called Seasonal Affective Disorder, aka SAD.

According to nimh.nih.gov there are two different kinds of SADs, winter-pattern SAD and summer-pattern SAD. They have different kinds of symptoms with some being oversleeping,

overeating and social withdrawal for winter-pattern, and for summer-pattern, it might instead be trouble sleeping, restlessness, and anxiety.

It's of course different for everyone but these are the most common ones. They do not have anything with the calendar, though. It's more depending on how the seasons change. Researchers have been trying to figure out what causes SAD and they have come further with winter-pattern causes.

They don't have much research about summer-pattern other than they have reduced melatonin in the body due to longer and hotter days that might worsen the sleep quality.

The conclusion they have

about winter-pattern is that the body has lower levels of serotonin which helps to regulate the mood. During winter time when there is a shorter amount of daylight, many don't get enough of Vitamin D that helps to promote serotonin activity.

Senior Maggie Smith describes her feelings about the current darker times. "Leaving in the morning and it being dark and coming home when it's dark makes it feel like I have no free time and like I have lost the day. It makes me less motivated, it's dark all the time and it makes me want to be in bed all the time instead of being productive."

It is normal to feel a little down now when facing dark-

er times, especially in the beginning when the body is just getting used to it again. People should make sure to go outside on sunny days to get that extra Vitamin D to boost the serotonin activity.



Electoral College Isn't Perfect; Still the Best, Most Reliable Option

By LEVI DICKENS
CREEK CURRENT STAFF REPORTER

In 1789, the United States Constitution was made effective by transforming the way of government by the United States by replacing the previous document, the Articles of Confederation. The Articles of Confederation had been very reactionary to the idea of a central power, relying on states being independent, but working with one another, which was not effective, as many states were loyal to themselves rather than the whole of the United States. And so the Constitution changed that by adding a single position of power along with Congress and the Supreme Court, this position being that of the President of the United States.

Article Two of the US Constitution is where the position of president was

implemented, along with the means of how a president is elected. The way of election was that of the Electoral College, a group of electors that have been gathered to vote for who is to be president, with the number of electors a state has being equal to how many congressional representatives that state has. And while the Electoral College was appropriate for its time, there is a growing number of people who wish to repeal the Electoral College.

Though there are problems with the Electoral College, but there is no better alternative.

One issue that the Electoral College promotes is that of a two-party system. While there are certainly advantages to a two-party system, as any single thing does, there are also several disadvantages to such a system. According

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE IS THE BEST OPTION

- **FEDERALISM**
Balances power between federal and state governments
- **STATE REPRESENTATION**
Gives smaller states a greater voice in national elections
- **PREVENTS DOMINANCE BY POPULOUS AREAS**
Ensures presidents must appeal to a broad range of voters

to a poll by the Pew Research Center, a quarter of the nation feels they aren't represented fully in either the Democratic or the Republican parties. Other nations, such as Germany, have a system where there are several parties instead of just two.

Another issue encouraged by the Electoral College is voter turnout. In states that are firmly one party or an-

other, some people feel their votes don't matter, as the outcome of what party their state will side with is already determined by past elections, and so they don't vote.

Despite these two issues, there are also several topics that come to the defense of the Electoral College. In systems such as the one Germany has, there are often moments of parties with similar

interests working together for their representatives to get into the house, which results in the system degrading to a right and left despite multiple parties. The Electoral College also balances out small states and large states, and historically has been a stable system, one we've used for the entirety of our constitution.

The Electoral College is not flawless. Just as with any system, just as with nearly any single thing that has ever existed, there are issues. Nothing can solve everything without causing problems on its own. Despite its flaws, the Electoral College is still a stable and relatively fair system of government. The United States has survived for two hundred thirty-six years with this system. It's solid and reliable, and the alternatives are not better. That is why the Electoral College should stay.

Pursuit of High GPA Can Lead to Anxiety; Learning Matters More

By MAGGIE SMITH
CREEK CURRENT NEWS EDITOR

From a very young age, children are taught to strive for A's, to not accept less from themselves, which is not inherently bad; however, putting the emphasis on the grade and not the actual understanding of the material can have negative effects. Being a straight A student is

nice, but it is not helpful to just learn the material for the tests and forget everything as soon as it's over.

Putting so much pressure on children to get a specific grade is a bad idea. It just produces a lot of anxiety in the 'high achieving' students. In most honors classes, the kids do not care about what they learn; they care about

keeping their 4.0 GPA. A lot of honors or dual credit students have a lot of anxiety about even getting a B, which can be an issue. Children should not have so much anxiety about failing one test that they get physically sick.

A's are important but they are not more important than students' mental health or learning. The goal of every

student should be to comprehend the material, not the specific grade they get. Life has so many more opportunities to prove oneself. Putting so much pressure on young students will just lead to life-long struggles to always be perfect. Students need to learn that being perfect isn't possible and that it is okay to mess up.

An A is wonderful, but a C is amazing if that person actually tried to remember the material.



Physical Media Offers Many Advantages Including Memory Retention

By CASSIDY COOK
CREEK CURRENT STAFF REPORTER

"While streaming platforms have reshaped how people consume media, they cannot fully replace the value of physical media."

Jovanna Gallegos
Michigan Daily
January 27, 2026.

Why read a physical book when there is a way to read it on a digital platform? What is the point of saving DVDs if the power goes out during

every little storm? In our current society, social media is the largest form of content and information. As a result, people have begun questioning whether physical media is still necessary. In a time when prices are rising and digital storage is expanding, what makes tangible media worth the time and increasing prices?

Contrary to popular belief, physical media isn't only aesthetically pleasing; it



also holds many benefits. Studies show that physical print offers better memory retention. Printed photos act as keepsakes, a physical way of capturing memories.

Physical print offers a better emotional connection as well.

One form of physical print in particular is the newspaper. While the newspaper may seem most useful in the old days when there was no television news to entertain and inform oneself with in the morning, it is one of the most beneficial ways to grow in literacy.

Reading daily, whether the story is long or short,

has been proven to improve brain health. Newspapers do exactly that by entertaining readers with diverse topics and providing updated headlines to keep the reader engaged. Using short stories in an age when people yearn for quick entertainment is an efficient way to help reduce stress, boost focus and memory, and build positive mindsets. There is just something so special about holding a physical newspaper as well.



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FOR THE RECORD



By ADRIANA WEST
Opinion Editor

Equality Has No Gender

In today's world, it is often viewed that men's studies are seen as more important than women's studies, which is a major concern. Despite all the progress women have made for equal rights, a persistent prejudice still exists, showing a hierarchy of importance. After years and years of fighting for equal rights, people often say that we have finally gotten to the point where both men and women are now treated as equals, but that's just not true.

Men's sports, engineering, and men's studies are often prioritized and can receive more funding and higher pay. While women's fields are treated as insignificant or just hobbies, it's so much more than that. Teaching, a woman-dominated field, receives around \$59,000 a year, while truck drivers, a male-dominated field, receive \$60,000 to \$69,000.

IC teacher, Mrs. Smith, says, "Male-dominated fields do tend to pay higher than women-dominated fields," but she still wonders if this imbalance is caused by gender inequality.

This imbalance causes and has caused long-lasting consequences. Women's fights are seen as underrepresented, causing softer voices and reinforcing the stereotypes that were set centuries ago, which caused this. These softer voices can contribute to the vicious cycle of inequality. It can erase women's contribution to history, culture, and science.

In addition, this evident favoritism affects women's opportunities and their view of themselves. When women's studies are deemed as less important, it sends a message that what women do, what they say, and think are less and should be put second.

It is Time to Take Women Seriously

By LIV PETRO
& NATALIE GRIFFIN
CREEK CURRENT STAFF REPORTERS

People have been undermining women since the beginning of civilization. For generations, the thoughts and opinions of women were treated as background noise, unimportant; they did not matter. It was not until recent years that women could break out of the "housekeeper" role that society had boxed them in. Though things may be getting better, it is painfully obvious that most men still do not take women seriously. The sexism may not always look like the dramatic examples within the history books; sometimes it's subtle, disguised as pointless, brushed off as harmless misunderstandings. But it's very real and affects women everyday.

One of the clearest examples is something almost every woman recognizes immediately: mansplaining, a man condescendingly explaining something to them, assuming that she's ignorant or stupid. Everything about these interactions is simply infuriating for women. Slow talking, assuming the woman is confused or uninformed, when in reality the woman

often knows more than the man himself. A man explaining something to a woman is not automatically mansplaining; the immediate assumption that the woman needs the help of a strong manly man makes it mansplaining. For women these interactions aren't just annoying, they're exhausting. They reinforce the message that women are naturally less competent, less knowledgeable, or less capable of leading a conversation.

This bias towards women shapes the way women think about themselves. Internalized misogyny is a real and serious thing. Women absorb the sexist ideas around them which can lead to doubting their own abilities or tearing down other women because of the idea that women have to compete.

The insecurity that comes with misogyny is a large cause for competition within women. A girl might convince herself she needs to be prettier, softer, or that she is "not enough" for a certain subject, not because it's true, but because she's been quietly taught to believe it. Girls believe that they need to find their security within men instead of in themselves. This mindset can discourage

women from pursuing the future they truly desire.

Women experience unfortunate double standards when it comes to them pursuing their careers. If a woman wants to have a career, especially one that takes a lot of time and effort, they are asked if she is sure that she doesn't want to settle down and start a family. If a woman wants to focus on being a mother, she is then accused of feeding into the traditional wife stereotype. No matter what a woman does when it comes to her career, she will be judged by others for it. When men want to go into a serious career, they aren't immediately questioned if they really want to do this and not build a family instead.

It's time to take women seriously and bridge the gender gap.



THE FINAL POLISH



By JENNA ROETHEMEIER
Editor-In-Chief

New Montser Energy Drinks

Monster energy is taking on other female-focused energy brands by making a female-focused energy drink. By launching a better-for-you energy drink, Monster is going to have some real competition.

One of Monsters biggest competitors will be Alani Nu, which energy drink brand Celsius bought earlier this year. Luckily for Monster, there is a growing demand for energy drinks.

The new energy drinks are called FLRT, and these drinks have zero-sugar and have ingredients that make the energy drink "better for you."

These ingredients consist of collagen, hair, skin, and immunity support.

FLRT is expected to hit stores around March of 2026. The first four initial flavors will be Berry Tempting, Guava Lava, Strawberry Fling and Sunset Squeeze.

Many fans are disagreeing with this new drink line, calling it an outdated attempt to market women, using aesthetic and generic "female" benefits. The name FLRT and the flavor names like "Berry Tempting" were seen as cringy and condescending.

Fans who already enjoy regular monsters (some of which have "girly" cans) feel they don't need a separate, "girly" line, as they like the originals.

Some positive points that fans had where some found the zero-sugar, collagen and immunity boosting aspects interesting, even if the branding was off.

Others enjoyed the lighter, pastel cans and slim design compared to the traditional monsters. Overall, most people are not very thrilled with the new energy drinks; but time will tell if these new energy drinks will reach its hopeful high sales and if the marketing technique works.

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