

The Stinger



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"People traveled across the country just to experience the celestial phenomenon" (page 3).



"Our generation needs to do our best to keep Earth a safe, healthy and beautiful place to grow and live" (page 4).



"Those who have seen the new film have been left with a sour taste in their mouths" (page 8).



"Members participate in the interactive, imaginative game of Dungeons & Dragons" (page 11).

TikTok may be banned in US

By Mia Mitchell
Editor-in-Chief

Recently, a lot of controversy has sparked over the possible ban of the popular TikTok app in America. TikTok is one of the most popular social media apps not only in America, but across the globe. On March 13th, a bill was passed in the United States House of Representatives which would, if passed, ban TikTok. It is expected to move through the Senate fairly soon. Even though a lot of Americans, especially teens, are panicking over the bill, the details of it are important, so here is everything you need to know.

Currently, TikTok is owned by ByteDance, which is a company located in Beijing, China. Congress wants to force TikTok to sell the company to a non-Chinese owner because they feel that security threats are present. The main concerns are with the Chinese government

stealing data from Americans and potentially using the app to affect the upcoming presidential election. If the bill is passed, it would give "ByteDance six months to find a new buyer for TikTok" (npr.org).

Even though the bill arose because of security issues, many Americans feel as though banning TikTok is a violation of their first amendment rights, especially freedom of speech. ZBTHS student Claire O'Brian, shares, "TikTok is used as a major source of information, banning it could be considered a violation of our free speech rights, granted to us by the First amendment." O'Brian continued, "The banning of TikTok would be an instance of harmful censorship...The TikTok ban is just another poorly disguised attempt to repress the people who speak up and expose all of the corruption and immorality of our government."

Many other Americans agree, and have been calling their state representatives and senators to attempt to stop the bill from being passed and becoming policy. TikTok has been supporting the pushback by providing phone numbers and email addresses of representatives' offices to U.S. users.

Since "President Biden has indicated that he will sign the law," (npr.org), it is very possible that the bill could be passed in the Senate. However, considering all of the push back from TikTok and U.S. app users, especially with regards to the first amendment controversy, it will most likely be challenged in courts.

Overall, Americans will have to see what happens with TikTok in the next few months, and supporters will need to continue to express their opinions on the bill in hopes that their representatives will vote for what voters want.

Senior quotes available

By Jairo Rojas-Magallon
Stinger Reporter

Senior Zee-Bees who wish to memorialize their senior year with a quote, may do so in by purchasing one for the *Senior Edition* of *The Stinger*. Each senior may buy one quote from the bookstore alley during lunch periods on May 2nd and 3rd.

The quotes will be included in the May 2024

issue of the Stinger, and each senior who attends senior breakfast on May 16th will get a free paper copy of the Stinger, which can be then be inserted into purchased yearbooks.

Each quote must be school-appropriate and legible or it will not be included in the newspaper. Come buy your quote and make a memory that will last forever!

Photo credit: May 2023 Stinger



Senior quotes were offered in last year's May Stinger.

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Seniors count down to graduation

By Maggie Mae McCarthy
Stinger Reporter

With graduation coming up soon, the Senior ABC countdown is on! Over the years this tradition has been an activity for seniors to have fun and be creative with their last few weeks of high school approaching.

This year's days, which were partly based on previous years but also updated by suggestions from the senior class officers, have a lot of people excited to participate. When asked about the themes, Lily Loy said "... I think they are pretty good. I'm really excited to do certain days like iconic duos or the bring anything but a backpack day." Olivia Gundy said, "I'm excited for teacher swap day and for elderly day. I can't wait to see what people come up with for all the themes."

If you know Mrs. Haske, math teacher and Zion-Benton graduate, you

know she always participates in every theme day each year. When it comes to this year she said, "I'm all in every day, I have always had so much fun with it."

Ms. Peterson, senior class sponsor and ZBTHS Career Counselor, wants to remind everyone that all school rules still apply when it comes to dress code. She said that the ABC countdown, "...is [an] opportunity for people to celebrate in a way that best suits their celebration style. The countdown is a communal way to celebrate as an entire class. I think kids will be excited for the celebration of the final days!"

Seniors, be sure to capture all your ABC countdown outfits in pictures to send in zbswarm on Instagram to be featured. Let's make this the best ABC countdown that ZBTHS has ever had and dress up every day.

ABC Countdown Days

4/8	Actor/Anime/Artist
4/9	Backpack Day
4/10	Country v Country Club
4/11	Dress to Impress
4/12	Elderly Day
4/15	Fairytale Day
4/18	Game Day
4/19	Hippie Day
4/22	Iconic Duo Day
4/23	Jersey Day
4/24	Kindergarten Day
4/25	Luau Day
4/29	Minion Day
4/30	Neon Day
5/1	Olympic ZB Day
5/2	Pajama Day
5/3	Quarantine Day
5/6	Rhyme w/o Reason
5/7	Superhero Day
5/8	Teacher Swap
5/9	USA Day
5/10	Vine (meme) Day
5/13	Where are Seniors?
5/14	Xchange Autographs
5/15	Yeehaw
5/16	Zee-Bee Pride

ZB's fashion prom theme

By Janalise Jimenez
Stinger Reporter

Vogue has been a prevailing magazine for over 130 years and is known for showcasing the latest fashions within their pages and on their covers throughout those years. This year's Zion-Benton Class officers have taken that inspiration in the theme Vintage Vogue for 2024 Prom.

Mrs. Niemiera, who coordinated the details, says she is happy with the theme and excited for everyone to "feel comfortable in their own fashion style." Vogue is a fashion centric topic; class officers hope to encourage that evolution of style with the broad "vintage" theme, and everyone can express their own concepts, dress

their best, and enjoy their 2024 Prom. This year's color scheme includes pinks, maroons, whites, and blacks, along with the inclusion of students and their varied interpretation of Vintage Vogue. From photoboosts to food, juniors and seniors can come out and enjoy a night to dress up and create memories before the end of the

school year, and seniors can have a final memorable night before graduation. If you are interested in buying a ticket, they are on sale April 8th-April 26th and cost \$65 dollars, cash only. You can buy them at the bookstore during your lunch periods or before/after school. The prom, open to Juniors and Seniors, will be held on May 11th.

Graphic credit: K. Niemiera



Seniors, ready for graduation?

By **Abbigail McLaughlin**
Stinger Reporter

Seniors! We're sure you're ready for this last month of school to fly by and all the exciting events leading up to graduation, so here are some dates you should be aware of.

By now you should already have submitted your senior contract. If you have a 3.0 cumulative GPA and are active in at least one activity/extracurricular for multiple years you can submit an original senior speech proposal no longer than 500 words to Principal Livingston by **April 23rd**.

If you were invited to the Senior Honors Program, the practice is going to be held in the PAC during 2nd and 3rd period on **April 24th**. The Senior Honors Program

ceremony is going to take place at 6:30 pm but seniors need to arrive and check in by 5:45 pm wearing your gown and in formal attire on **April 25th**. The Community Awards Program that is invitation only begins at 6:30 pm but the students should check in by 5:45 pm wearing formal clothing and your gown on **May 6th**.

Prom is coming up and you should make sure you're there! It will be held at the Holiday Inn in Gurnee, IL on **May 11th** and tickets can be bought during lunch periods at the bookstore with cash only from **April 8-26th**.

As **May 16th** is seniors last day, a celebration is in full effect with a day full of events - 8 am: Breakfast, 9 am: Senior



Photo credit: Emerald Night Photography

Superlatives, 9:30 am: 721 Celebration, 11 am: Lunch, 12 pm: Dismissed.

Graduation Practice is a required commencement practice that starts at 1 pm in the PAC on **May 17th**, your senior contract must be turned in and you must present either a school ID or State ID to receive your tickets.

Graduation will be held in the Athletic Field, however if there's inclement

weather it will be moved to the main gym; all graduates must report in line by 1:30 pm and the Procession begins at 3 pm on **May 19th!**

To finalize your graduation you must pick up your official diploma at the bookstore beginning **May 28th, Mondays through Thursdays, 7 am to 4 am!** Enjoy this last month of your high school experience and soak up all the memories!

Rare solar eclipse passes US

By **Kassie Barbanida**
Stinger Reporter

If you were at school last Monday (April 8th), you likely had the chance to witness an amazing spectacle: a solar eclipse. A total solar eclipse is especially rare in the United States, and we won't see another one for twenty years.

A solar eclipse occurs when "the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the Sun" (NASA). This only happens from time to time because the Moon's orbit doesn't perfectly align with the Sun and Earth. When they align, it is called the eclipse season and happens twice a year. During a total solar eclipse, the Moon blocks all of the Sun's light, creating the path of totality. At this moment, the once bright sky turns to complete darkness. Instead of the

Sun, we are left with the sight of a black disc surrounded by the Sun's glowing atmosphere, the corona. Though it is the middle of the day, we can actually see some of the shining stars and planets that are normally visible at night.

During Monday's eclipse, viewers were reminded that they should never look directly at the Sun because it can cause severe eye damage. To safely view the eclipse, students and staff were given specialized eye protection that were specially ordered for the event. People often use eclipse glasses, a solar viewer, or an indirect viewing method like a pinhole projector.

When using one of these devices, do not look at any type of optical device such as a camera lens or telescope. At totality "You can view the eclipse

directly without proper eye protection... when the Moon completely obscures the Sun's bright face" (NASA). But as we are not in the direct path of totality here in Northern Illinois, glasses are required the whole time. Fortunately, ZBTHS purchased nearly 3 thousand pair for

students to use to watch it with their classmates.

People traveled across the country just to experience the celestial phenomenon and it stands as a reminder to appreciate the beauty of the universe. There's really nothing to lose in seeing this rare opportunity.

Photo credit: www.scientificamerican.com



Haney and Garcia face off

By Jose Zavala
Stinger Reporter

On Saturday April 20th, current WBC Super lightweight champion Devin Haney will be facing and defending his title against Ryan Garcia. Both boxers are known throughout the world for being the two youngest stars in boxing with renowned skills within the sport.

Haney comes into the fight with a record of 31 wins and 0 losses after a thrilling victory last May against Vasiliy Lomachenko. Garcia comes in with a cemented 24 wins and 1 loss after being in one of boxing's biggest matches last April against Gervonta Davis.

When asked who do you think would win the overall fight, Zee-Bee stu-

dent Hayden Morgan responded, "Ryan because of his speed." Another Zee-Bee student Ivan Escamilla had a different opinion: "Devin Haney, he got better defense and he doesn't get hit as much as Ryan does, Ryan gets hit."

The two ambitious boxers have solidified their careers with success even when they find themselves in different status in the sport. However this isn't Haney's and Garcia first encounter in the boxing ring, before this upcoming match, Haney and Garcia met six times in the amateurs ending up with a series of 3-3 between the two. The last time they fought was in January of 2015; they were both 16 at the time. When in the USA Youth National Cham-

Photo credit: www.badlefthook.com



Devin Haney and Ryan Garcia fight for Haney's lightweight title.

pionships, Haney won Now, 9 years later, they'll the three-round contest cross paths yet again in a unanimous decision. at a professional level.

Make a difference this Earth Day

By Abbigail McLaughlin
Stinger Reporter

Our planet is our home, and our generation needs to do our best to keep Earth a safe, healthy and beautiful place to grow and live. Earth Day, on April 22nd, is used to celebrate the improvements the people have made to protect the environment as well as spread awareness to keep it protected in the future.

Earth day was created in 1970 from Senator Gaylord Nelson as there was no EPA, no clean water act, and no clean air act. Senator Nelson made this annual day as a way to force the issue onto the national agenda to make the world and living situations better.

Machines, buildings, and automobiles put so much pollution out into the air that it can make it unhealthy for us to simply breathe

on a day to day basis.

It's so easy to not be involved in movements and look the other way. However, when it comes to the place we live, we are all responsible for how we treat the planet, and everyone needs to do their part.

Every year there is a new theme for Earth Day, this year it is "Planet Vs. Plastic." It serves as a rallying cry to focus on one of our most obvious environmental issues. Here are some ways you can celebrate Earth Day this year: plant a tree, recycle, donate, volunteer for cleanups, pick up trash, and ride a bike instead of an automobile. It doesn't take a whole lot to keep our environment clean and to prevent deforestation. All it takes is a group of people who care enough to make minor changes to their lives to ensure we are

doing the right thing for not only the environment but also for ourselves and our future generations.

Celebrate and spread the word about doing better for our planet and our future this Earth Day!

Photo credit: www.earthreminder.com



April Showers by Gloria Myers



Have an idea for a comic, creative writing you'd like to submit, or original artwork you'd like us to include?

Email submissions to jeffrey.sevener@zb126.org!

April Feature: Testing

SAT has significant changes

By Euriah Williams
Stinger Reporter

This year's SAT is set to switch from a paper and pencil format to a digital for the official testing date of April 16th, 2024. No more number 2 pencils. No more bubble sheets. The SAT will now be completely taken on school laptops.

And that's not the only change for the test.

With the digital SAT, students will get more time per question. Math questions will be explained more concisely than before, and reading passages will also be shorter. The SAT will be about 2 hours in length so shorter by about an hour. It will also feature a countdown on the test so you can easily track where you are and

how you're managing your time. Gone are the days of the proctor interrupting the silence or writing how much time you have left on a whiteboard as you test.

Another significant change will be in the overall format of the test. Each of the reading and math sections will be divided in half, making the test adaptive. Based on a student's success on the first half of each test, the second half will either be harder or easier.

Zee-Bee students already saw how the test will work in the fall, during the practice test. Unlike many other schools who experienced testing issues due to technology problems, ZBTHS's fall testing went fairly smoothly.

Photo credit: J. Carlson



Students prepare for AP Tests

By Trinity Camara
Editor-in-chief

As the 2023-2024 school year comes to an end, students all around the school prepare for AP exams. AP classes are a type of advanced class that is equal to a college-level course. At the end of the school year, students enrolled in these classes will take a test that determines if students will earn a class credit to count towards their required classes in college. This exam is counted for as a college credit if a student scores at least a 3 on a grading scale of 1-5 for many colleges. Students and teachers work diligently to prepare students for these exams all year.

Students who are enrolled in AP classes explained why they took these classes and how they are preparing for their upcoming exams.

Alex Damitz, a senior here at ZBTHS, who is en-

rolled in AP Stats, said, "Honestly, I'm just working hard in class, and working with friends to understand the material". Working with peers and classmates can help students grasp the concepts taught in class, making students more successful in AP testing.

Another student, Lorelei Scott, states, "For AP Gov I have been studying notes, and we have done a lot of work in class to prepare. There has been a lot of practice for the essays and all the quizzes we take help a lot with remembering things. The notes we take are a very useful thing for review." Studying material provided by teachers such as notes and classwork can help students feel ready for their exam. Practice essays that appear on these tests are practices as well, which can help students navigate the writing portion of the exams.

A third student includ-

ed her input about this topic. Clara Kelly, who is enrolled in AP Spanish class, was asked how she is preparing for her upcoming AP exam. She answers, "taking the AAPPL test (The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages) and speaking Spanish as much as I can with people for AP Spanish".

Lastly, Anesa Kight explains how AP classes help her "extend my knowledge in the class I took". AP classes go into depth about a topic, which can expand a student's insight for better understanding.

AP courses can be very beneficial to students. Students use their knowledge gained in these classes to not only learn and process information but to score as high as they can on their AP exam. If you are enrolled in AP classes, try to use this time to study for upcoming exams.

How to prepare for the SAT

Graphic credit: forbes.com

By Samantha Whitlow
Stinger Reporter

As SAT season rounds the corner, a lot of students start to stress out. Whether or not you are taking the pre SAT or the real SAT test, it's still very important that you go to each one. By going to every session before your junior year in spring, you are giving yourself a look at your "do's and don'ts" for your final go around. One major tip for prepping is Khan Academy. On the website, there is an option to take a small test for SAT prep. The results then determine what you need to practice and gives you multiple opportunities to work on those fields. As a senior, I can say that Khan Academy was probably the best possible help when it came to feeling prepared.

Another tip is to figure out your testing style before it's time! Do you read the excerpt or the questions first? Do you need to write out math prob-

lems? How do you figure out meanings of words you may not understand? Can I relate this to something I learned in class? All of these questions can help you feel more confident when you are test-taking. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses will greatly impact your outlook on the test.

Besides strategy, you can take care of your physical/mental well-being. One way is eating breakfast or a small snack in the morning. By eating in the morning, you are setting your energy and awareness levels for the day you have ahead of you. Do not stay up late prior to the test! You need to sleep for your brain to be able to process information and hold it. Studies show that sleeping for an average of 7 hours after studying is what helps best. One last tip is to make sure you are drinking water and staying completely hydrated. Without water, your body

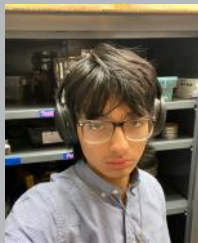


becomes confused and often results in feeling sick.

In conclusion, there are many helpful tips to do well on your SATs but what matters most is the desire to do well and how much you believe in yourself.

Taking the test and trusting yourself to do your best is what will encourage you to do your best. And juniors... you're almost done! Good luck with your SAT and remember these tips!

Your Two Cents



"I would've used more time to study and take practice tests. Although they might seem useless, they improved my score slightly for the small amount I did. Probably would've gotten a better score if I took more practice tests."

Rodrigo Lopez



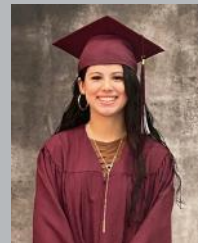
"Read a lot of books"

Destinee Kimble



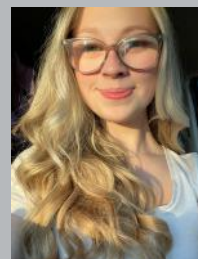
How would you recommend studying for the upcoming SAT?

By Donnie Anilao



"Completing the practice packets that teachers give you."

Ash Castellanos



"Sleep well and eat well the night before."

Mia Mitchell

Imaginary movie is scary good

By **Esmeralda Vara**
Staff Editor

Imaginary is a new horror movie that came out March 8th, created by Blumhouse Productions, a famous business known for making horror movies.

In the movie, it's based on a family who had recently moved into a new home. Jessica had lived in the home when she was younger but had moved. In the movie, there were two kids, one was a teenager and the other was just a little girl. When they moved into the house, then little girl had manage to find a old teddy bear in the basement of the house. The bear was named "Chauncey", and the girl had enjoyed playing with the bear. Jessica, the step-mother but is played by DeWanda

Wise, is in charge of taking care of the girls, Taylor and Alice, who are played by Taegen Burns and Pyper Braun. While her husband, Max, who is played by Tom Payne goes on a long trip for his band. After about the

first couple of days, many unusual things happen.

Alice had started to search for different things which is making Jessica concerned. Over the course of the movie, there are more unusual encounters hap-

pening around the house.

The more as the movie progresses, Jessica manages to know more about her childhood that she has forgotten over the years, seeing her father after he had gone blind years ago.

Photo credit: medium.com



Chauncey the stuffed teddy bear provides thrills in Imaginary.

Megamind 2: a big disappointment

By **Rebekah Hampton**
Stinger Reporter

The movies of our childhood helped shape our lives, with their silly humor and heartfelt morals. Animation studios like Disney, Dreamworks and Pixar have grown their abilities throughout the years, seemingly becoming better with each film, at least, that's how it should be. Yet, sometimes whether it's out of greed or desperation, they make a sequel to a movie that is significantly less successful than its predecessor.

It's very rare for the public to generally agree that a sequel is just as good, if not better, than the first movie in the series, but it's not impossible. Take *Shrek* as an example, that was a very well received movie, and when

Dreamworks made *Shrek 2* it was praised for being just as good as the last. I believe that has something to do with the firm foundation of the story that was set in the first movie, it gave the next something to build off of. They kept the same voice actors, same animation, and same character growth from before.

Now, the same can't be said for yet another one of Dreamworks films, *Megamind*. On March 1st, 2024, *Megamind vs. the Doom Syndicate* was aired and streamed exclusively to Peacock. Fans of *Megamind* were shocked when they suddenly got the trailer for this new adaptation just a month before its release.

The lack of consistency of elements from the first film turned a lot of viewers away from even giving

it a watch. Just from the trailer alone you can immediately determine that the animation quality has been majorly downgraded, with it being similar to the *Kung Fu Panda* TV series animation. For a TV series, lesser quality of animation is able to be excused since they have to put out a lot more quantity.

Yet when it comes to a movie, animation studios are more likely to show off their abilities since they have more time to put in effort, so fans are left wondering why Dreamworks seemed to put hardly any effort into this new movie.

Another major inconsistency are the voice actors. *Megamind* had originally come to life with the voice of Will Ferrell, but is now being voiced by Keith Ferguson. While

this has caused an uproar amongst *Megamind's* fanbase, most people don't realize this isn't the first time Keith Ferguson has voiced the beloved blue skinned alien. In 2010, *Megamind: Ultimate Showdown* was released, a video game spin off of the film, with Keith Ferguson behind the voice of *Megamind*.

Those who have seen the new film have been left with a sour taste in their mouths, as evidenced by the whopping 10% on rotten tomatoes and 2.3/10 on IMDb. Dreamworks has proved themselves to be a competent animation studio with countless wonderful movies, but that does not mean they are incapable of making poor choices once in a while, and *Megamind vs. the Doom Syndicate* is proof of that.

Zee - Bee Art Showcase



Lorilei Scott

My ideas usually just come randomly. I'm working on a random sketch, and then I think about adding all my little weird elements. My art process is a trusting process for myself. I rarely have a vision of how exactly I'm expecting one of my pieces to look.



Jordan Lawrence

I chose these photographs because they're the peak days of my life, and when I used any device for a camera and made it look good. My process is rich-colored editing, and framing with the Rule Of Thirds.

ZEE-BEES YOU SHOULD KNOW

Featured Student

Logan Stancil



My name is Logan L. Stancil, though you might have heard of me as Jesus. Yes I am that guy dressed up as Jesus for halloween last semester. I am roughly 6ft (don't fact check that) and I am most like one of the oldest stu-

dents currently in this school at the age of 19 years old. I have a small passion for cooking and culinary activities such as making pretzels, making different cultural foods, etc. My favorite kind of food is American BBQ and eastern Asian food. I have a big fascination with learning about history, anthropology, genealogy, and even topics like archaeology and biology. Throughout my 4 years of Zion Benton, I have had a lot of fun with friends that made coming here a lot more bearable and even enjoyable; though with each year that passes by, the students have generally and genuinely gotten worse. That's it, bye. :)

Featured Staff

Mr. Hughes (by Mr. Anderson)

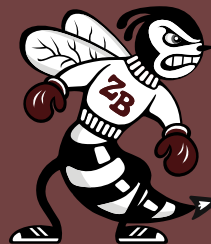


Hailing from Rhode Island and with a father who served as a naval officer, Mr. Hughes has traveled the country before making the Midwest his home. "I grew up with salt in my blood," he reminisces, "but out here it's on the roads." Mr. Hughes attended Northern Illinois University, where his interests in history led to many adventures in a ska band, in urban exploration, bicycling, and a short stint as a cartoon illustrator.

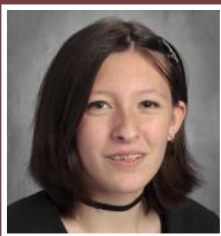
He has taught at Zion-Benton for over twenty years. In that time, he has taught most Social Science courses at one point or another. He has served as a coach for Speech and Cross Country teams, taken students on trips to Washington, DC, and once hung out with T-Pain. He is one of the foremost collectors of historical political memorabilia in Lake County and his passion for US history enlivens his classroom every day. "Evaluate the source!" a passerby may hear thundering down the hall from 306, "and you will unlock the secrets to life itself!" His wisdom, knowledge, and dedication have long helped students succeed on AP Exams, understand local history, and learn every line of *Glory*.

"Life is like riding a bike," Mr. Hughes tells his attentive advisees in his signature "Bike Check" lesson. "Preparation and practice are everything. Check your tires and gears, and don't lose sight of opportunities for new terrain. Take that risk to go off-road. Sometimes you fall down and sometimes you pop wheelies. You control the speed and you have to work hard at times. But you are ultimately in total control of your ride--and your future. Do great things!"

ZEE-BEE FOCUS

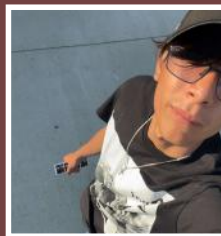


What do you think about the quality of movies today?



Abigail McGleam

"All the newer movies are either continuations, remakes, or unoriginal."



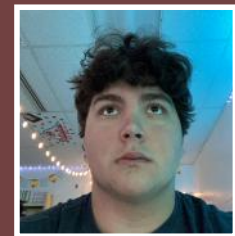
Jose Rosales

"They're horrible."



Jaxon Zaugra

"None of the movies in the past couple of years have been really interesting to me. Everything seems to be a trashy remake or an unoriginal story."



Noah Espinosa

"The quality of movies today is lacking compared to what we had from the 1970s to the late 2000s. Of course there are exceptions like *Godzilla Minus One 2023* and *Django unchained 2012*, but they will never truly be able to match up to what was."

April brings awareness of Autism

By **Megan Galeana**
Staff Editor

April is Autism Awareness Month. According to the CDC, "The recognition raises awareness about autism acceptance and promotes inclusion and connectedness for people with autism." ZBTHS Special Education Teacher, Ms. McKim, agreed. "This month offers space to consider how we can empower and include people with autism in our community. We hear more questions being asked and we also see students and staff embracing autism awareness month by wearing ribbons, shirts, and pins."

So, what is autism? Autism, or Autism spectrum disorder (ASD), is described by the CDC as "a developmental disability

caused by differences in the brain." These differences lead those with autism to communicate, think, behave, learn, and move differently than others. Ms. McKim said, "I believe everyone fits together like a puzzle piece, each of us with abilities and challenges." She

continued, "When we say that everyone matters and should have a voice; when we embrace diverse perspectives and experiences, our community becomes more empathetic, innovative, and grows together."

Teachers and Staff at ZBTHS want every student to graduate high school

with a desire to continue to learn and grow. Ms. McKim stated she wants students with disabilities to walk away from high school with a "continued curiosity and thirst for knowledge. When we continue our path seeking growth, our potential is unlimited."

Photo credit: www.nsula.edu



D&D club welcomes new players

By **Donnie Anilao**
Stinger Reporter

The D&D Club, located in room 348 in the math hallway, has their members participate in the interactive, imaginative game of Dungeons & Dragons, or D&D for short. The club is sponsored by Ms. Maguire, and the club meets every Tuesday from the end of the school day to about 5:00 pm. So, it's necessary to have a way home that isn't the late bus like a parent pick-up up or walking home if possible.

All club members are split into separate groups, each run by a Dungeon Master, or DM, of the group to lead the campaign/story that will be told. Club members can alter story events by their interactions with NPCs (non-player characters) and PCs (player characters), though almost all actions are determined by

rolling a set of polyhedral dice. To many members, the story interactions are the best parts of this club. First-year member Alyssa Sajuan agrees: "it is definitely the story telling and the fact that we can get into this fantasy world." second-year member Daryl Taylor adds, "The best part of this club, from what I remember, was when the co-host burns a fish in a net in an epic gamer way." The sometimes crazy scenarios our DMs create paired with the equally crazy actions the players choose to do will lead to memorable scenes for all and will create friendships between the players.

Some who are initially interested in the game are intimidated by the complexity that comes with character creation and the battle sequences. However, the club sponsor will help



Photo credit: www.gamespot.com

Tiamat is the five-headed dragon from D&D and is an iconic enemy.

a new member in creating their character while the DMs will help a new player understand their abilities in battle and in role-playing scenes. The D&D community is very welcoming to new members.

It's a learning process to get used to how everything works. First-year member Luis Tenorio explains, "As a beginner, it

can be very complicated, but the more you go on, the more you start to understand how to work most of the mechanics of the battle sequences like initiative, attack bonuses, and attack rolls." Playing D&D can be very addictive, and players look forward to upcoming games like people wait for the next episode of their favorite shows.

Track & field season brings changes

By Janalise Jimenez
Stinger Reporter

This year's track season looks different from last year. Some seniors graduated at the end of last season, and it was also the last year for Coach Lee and Coach Strickland. Having to fill in new positions has expanded the track coaching staff. Coach Di Grazia shares some details about the new additions and some interesting facts about who these coaches are.

ZB Alum, Coach Rios, has made a strong introduction to Zion-Benton and become the head boys coach. He is prone to motivational speeches and passionate tips on improvement and progress. His impact on the track team is apparent in this year's slogan becoming "Dominate."

After his preference and goals of 'dominating the track season.' Familiar alums Coach White and Coach Tolliver rearrange coaching positions on the men's side as well. Coach White has begun coaching jumps. Di Grazia mentions he has joined "to create more continuity between football and track & field." Coach Tolliver, usually with distance runners, has also begun coaching throws this year, along with another ZB alum: Coach Reed. Coach Reed was a state qualifier during her last year at ZB in the discus.

"Coach Henry was a



2024 Zion-Benton Girls Track at NSC Conference

valuable member of the hurdle crew as well as the 4X400 relay back in his Zee-Bee days," says Di Grazia, talking about the addition of Coach Henry as he coaches jumps and hurdles.

The latest changes to staffing have been added to veteran coaches: Coach Di Grazia (women's head coach), Coach Cuttill (women's sprinting coach), and Coach Anderson (men's distance coach). Di Grazia and Anderson lead the distance crew, as well as coaching Cross Country in the fall. When asked about the changes, Coach Di Grazia shares, "Overall, the cooperative energy between the men's and women's teams has helped everyone become closer and more supported so that everyone can get 1% better every day!"

Photo credit: Emerald Night Photography

The season started with Valentine's Day relays at Proviso West with a small bus of athletes for a coed meet. Runners got to start their season and try some new distances before full meets started.

Later, during the indoor track season the boys team placed 3rd at Proviso West and many of the boys took home medals. The season so far has had a great start, as athletes continue their training and make new personal records before heading into the outdoor season. In a note to runners, Coach Cuttill says, "it's exciting to know that everyone is going to get a chance to run an open 100m, 200m, 400m, jump, hurdle, etc. [They're] going to find [their] niche, and as a coach, it's really fun to see things play out." The teams' first outdoor meet was scheduled at Zion-Benton on Monday, April 8th. Please come out to support them next week as runners will once again have a home race on Saturday, April 20th.

Photo credit: Emerald Night Photography



Miradie Malombo Bakwabi and Coach DiGrazia at the Highland Park Invite

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