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# For students, N-word presentation fell short

Adviseries learned about history, impact of the word

by Julia Nagel

Though students and staff appreciated the aim of last month's N-word discussion, the presentation garnered mixed reviews on its length, setting, topics covered, and adviser execution.

The four day advisory presentation explored the violent history of the N-word, facilitated discussions and reflection, and encouraged students to make more thoughtful choices about language and the use of slurs.

Patricia Savage-Williams, the Special Ed Department Coordinator, was on the committee that developed the curriculum. She believes the presentation is important because it educates white students about the word and the harm that its usage can inflict.

"When white students use the N-word, they are knowingly or unknowingly drawing on a history of White violence and injustice toward people of color, especially black people in America. When students of color hear white students use the N-word, they feel unsafe," said Savage-Williams.

Although Savage-Williams does not expect the presentation to completely halt the use of the N-word in the school, she believes that it will make students think twice before they use racial slurs.

"Students will understand and be

more reluctant to use the N-word as a result of this lesson," said Savage-Williams.

In addition to the history of the word, senior Brian Joseph believes the presentation is particularly important to the New Trier community because of racist acts that have been committed at the school over the past few years.

"Individual instances of discrimination and sometimes even racism do occur at our high school—the writing of offensive, derogatory language and symbols on the walls of some of the bathrooms is the most pertinent example," said Joseph. "Activities like this that allow for constructive conversation surrounding an inherently uncomfortable topic may help decrease instances like these in the future."

As part of the presentation, the administration and school board released a statement that said, "We do not want our student body to use the N-word and racial slurs. These words reflect poorly on those who say them, they hurt others, and they destroy our school community."

Senior Isabelle Calkins believes this statement utilizes language that is too noncommittal, and doesn't specifically mention accountability for the use of racial slurs. Calkins specifically took issue with the phrase "We do not want..."

"How about 'We will not tolerate?' If the administration wants to take a stand against the N-word they need to make their stance clear and unquestionable," said Calkins.

Though Calkins did state that the administration took constructive risks

and sparked productive discussion, she felt the presentation fell short in a few ways.

"This needed to be a much longer discussion, and a discussion that didn't happen in our gender-binary adviseries. I appreciate the effort, I really do, but is this the toughest conversation we will have to have to make a serious difference? Far from it," said Calkins.

Sophomore Erik Jaman disagreed with Calkins in terms of length—he thinks the discussion should have been shorter, not longer.

"It's an important topic, but I think it was drawn out a little too long. I think two days maximum. There was really just two days of silence, just my teacher talking and all of us saying nothing or repeating what we already said," said Jaman.

According to Jaman, many students already know the history of the word, so learning it once again

was redundant.

Senior adviser Katie Parks took issue with a different aspect of the presentation. Because this was the first time the presentation was shown at the Winnetka campus, Parks recognized that there were a few kinks to work out among advisers.

"I think for a lot of advisers this is very new, this is very different. And unfortunately that means at least from what I'm hearing that it was hit or miss. And that's unfortunate because it's such an important discussion to have," said Parks.

Moving forward, senior adviser Egle Baliukaite would like to broaden the discussion to address other slurs or instances of racial injustice.

"We really concentrated on the N-word and it was only towards the end that we said 'and other slurs.' So maybe then the next step is to expand a little bit more. I think that this is just the first step and I hope that

there's a lot more, because clearly it's important, both in larger society and just at our school."

According to Assistant Superintendent for Student Services Tim Hayes, the administration does intend to expand the conversation in the future through their strategic plan.

"Our strategic plan has this whole initiative related to equity, and every department, area, and program in the school has an equity goal right now. And so for English, for example, it's around understanding what books and pieces of literature do we read and which should be added to what we're reading that's maybe beyond the traditional canon," said Hayes.

Savage-Williams wants students to know that the administration will be collecting feedback on the presentation and take it into consideration when creating similar curricula in the future.

"We are in the process of collecting feedback. I have heard a variety of informal reactions—mostly positive. However, there are those who continue to wonder why we are doing this," said Savage-Williams.

Although there is still significant room for improvement, adviser John Burnside remains determined to help further these conversations.

"I hope I get to continue to learn, and I hope I become better at having these difficult but important conversations because I want every student to be comfortable in the building. We all want that ultimate goal where everyone comes into the building and is comfortable and accepted and recognizes that they are recognized in all ways," said Burnside.

# Trustees decide pot doesn't align with Glencoe values

The Glencoe Board unanimously voted down a marijuana dispensary

by Alex Rubinstein

The Glencoe Board of Trustees voted unanimously against putting a marijuana dispensary in Glencoe on Nov. 21.

Illinois passed a change to the state law legalizing marijuana on Jan. 1, 2020. Because of this change, Glencoe and other towns including Northbrook have considered approving marijuana dispensaries.

Originally the Glencoe Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) voted 5-1 in favor of allowing dispensaries in Glencoe. Later, the Glencoe Board of Trustees then voted unanimously against the pot shops.

Glencoe resident and member of the ZBA, Alex Kaplan, was the only one to vote against putting a dispensary in Glencoe when the ZBA voted on the issue.

Kaplan said, "The major factor that played a role in my vote is that a marijuana dispensary is out of character with Glencoe's values. I was straining for factors—facts justified by substantive research and material—to sway my vote to "yes," but ultimately, none were sufficiently



IL legalizes marijuana Jan. 1 but Glencoe pushes back | Associated Press

presented."

Glencoe resident and a key leader of the movement against dispensaries, Karen Citow, also discussed the fact that marijuana dispensaries conflict with Glencoe's values.

"There are a lot of things that are legal but which we have decided we do not want in Glencoe. For example, we don't have a vaping store, a casino, a strip club, nor a pornography store. Glencoe is a very special place, and those of us lucky enough to live here have chosen this community specifically because it's a safe, nurturing place to raise our families, and a community which reflects our values."

The dramatic shift from the ZBA vote to the trustee vote is largely due to Glencoe residents, such as Citow, banding together to protest and to

make their opposition known to the trustees.

"By the night of the Village Board meeting on Nov. 21, Glencoe Neighbors' petition had over 750 signatures of residents opposed to pot shops in town, over 100 residents had written to the Board saying they were opposed (and why) to pot shops in town, and there were 120 yard signs on lawns across Glencoe. The night of the Village Board meeting we packed the house to standing room only with residents opposed to pot shops in town. Many people got up to speak to the board that night in opposition to pot shops in town including a toxicologist, an Emergency Room Doctor, a brain surgeon, a psychotherapist and a psychiatrist," said Citow.

After a village meeting on Oct. 7, residents who did not support

marijuana dispensaries helped to create the Glencoe Neighbors, a group of residents fighting against putting a dispensary in Glencoe.

The Glencoe Neighbors addressed specific safety concerns when it comes to people driving in Glencoe under the influence of marijuana.

According to the Glencoe Neighbors website, "Having a pot shop in Glencoe will mean our streets will be less safe as people will be driving around town under the influence of drugs. When police suspect someone is driving under the influence of alcohol, they can administer a breathalyzer test and take them off the roads if they are unsafe. There is no equivalent to that test to detect whether someone is driving under the influence of pot."

Glencoe's President, Larry Levin, agreed that driving under the influence is important to consider.

Levin said "Driving under the influence of cannabis is a complex and serious problem. The legalization of cannabis has in itself materially increased the driving under the influence problem, including how you determine if a person is driving under the influence."

However, Levin did not find that marijuana dispensaries themselves increase the threat to public safety.

"The experience of other states shows clearly that those wishing to use cannabis will find a means to

acquire it. It is the legalization that materially changes the equation and materially increases the public safety issues," said Levin.

Many students were in favor of Glencoe having dispensaries.

Senior Anna Feinerman agreed with Levin in that a dispensary would not threaten public safety. "It's weed. It's not like people don't have access to dispensaries already. The dispensaries could be beneficial because they provide local business and the legalization of marijuana means that people won't go out of their way to come to Glencoe because people will have their own dispensaries in their own towns," said Feinerman.

Senior Bobby Becker discussed the importance of adults making their own choices.

"I think it's about time to let grown adults make mature decisions about their own bodies when it comes to marijuana," said Becker.

The Glencoe Neighbors expressed concerns with the effect that dispensaries will have on teenagers. On their website, Glencoe Neighbors asked residents to think about the mixed messaging that dispensaries send.

"Children and teenagers are watching this and us very carefully. They are supremely interested in seeing how we decide to navigate the

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# Trump's impeachment: what you need to quid pro know

All the key players and events that have taken place so far in the trial

by Hope Talbot

As if Trump's tweets weren't difficult enough, it feels like the impeachment investigation only gets more confusing. Below is a play by play of the key players in what's happening in Washington.

## Whistle Blown:

Why are we even considering impeaching Trump? The formal investigation all stems from a complaint that came to the surface in September 2019 by a government "whistleblower".

This whistleblower, who is supposedly a member of the CIA and the National Security Council, filed a report claiming that they overheard questionable negotiations during a phone call between President Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in July. The whistleblower wrote in the complaint that they had received, "information from multiple U.S. Government officials that the President of the United States is using the power of his office to solicit interference from a foreign country in the 2020 U.S. election."

"This interference includes, among other things, pressuring a foreign country to investigate one of the President's main domestic political rivals," the whistleblower added.

Here's where things get messy. In high profile cases like these, Washington uses the Whistleblower Protection Act, keeping this intelligence official anonymous for their safety.

While multiple officials have stepped forward to support the report's claims, the Trump Administration has used this anonymity to try and discredit the source and point fingers at the Democratic Party.

## The "Perfect" Call:

While the public really only learned of the expose report as of September, the initial complaint was actually filed by the Whistleblower in July. These accusations wouldn't be released for almost two months because Director of National Intelligence Joseph Maguire never forwarded it.

Maguire wasn't the first to try and sit on the information. The whistleblower stated that he understood the "gravity" of the situation when senior White House Officials allegedly tried to "lock down" all records of the call, specifically the word-for-word transcript.

Once the existence of the report was leaked, the White House, backed into a corner, decided to release the transcript. Trump's conversation with Zelensky can pretty much be boiled down to this; Trump would give Ukraine a significant amount of foreign aid if Zelensky would agree to investigate the Biden Family.

Trump's main focus was to find dirt on Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, who was involved with a Ukrainian Energy Company.

The President believed that Hunter Biden's involvement with the overseas energy business pointed towards corruption that he could use against Joe Biden in the upcoming election.

Trump let Ukraine sleep on the decision, holding around \$390 million worth of aid over their heads.

When Zelensky called back, Trump directed the dealings to his personal lawyer, Rudolph Giuliani,

rather than to actual government officials. Upon the statements leak, Trump took to Twitter to defend himself claiming that the Zelensky call was "perfect" in terms of legal form, but the investigation was already underway.

## No Quid pro quo?

"The whole Russia thing was a Hoax, and the Ukraine thing is a Hoax, and the Democrats are a Joke. This is a disaster for them! The Do Nothing Democrats are hurting our Country, and they don't care!" stated Trump in a Nov. 24 tweet.

Trump, along with the majority of White House staff, insist that Trump is innocent and that the call wasn't bribery but rather a financial incentive which is a routine part of government.

White House senior policy adviser, Stephen Miller, appeared on Fox News to say that the impeachment hearings are democrats creating a "little Nancy Drew novel" and that if anyone was the whistleblower it's Trump for "exposing" the Bidens.

Over the past few weeks, however, numerous high ranking officials have stepped forward to condemn Trump with their hearing testimonies. Ambassador to the E.U., Gordon Sondland, as well as the National Security Aide to Mike Pence, Jennifer Williams, both overheard the July 25 phone call and were disturbed by the Ukraine exchange.

National security office council, Lt. Col. Alexander S. Vindman said that he tried to recover pieces of blacked out transcript but was unable. Vindman also stated that the financial freeze on Ukraine was not supported by most officials.

## What now?

The House Intelligence



Committee met on Dec. 4 before the House Judiciary Committee alongside four constitutional legal experts to help decide if they should start writing up articles of impeachment against Trump.

The White House Counsel denied Wednesday's invitation on behalf of Trump, calling the investigation, "baseless and highly partisan" and that Trump won't consider attending future impeachment events if he feels he won't be represented "meaningfully."

Democrats hope for a final decision from the House by Christmas, but the real power lies in the hands of the Senate. While the majority of the House are Democrats, it will take a two-thirds vote from the Senate with 53 republicans.

## Pot continued from page 1

new legislation legalizing recreational pot. We need to send them the right message," said Glencoe Neighbors.

The Glencoe board of trustees mainly entertained the idea of having dispensaries in Glencoe because of tax benefits.

According to Levin, the Board was considering the tax revenue to help offset the increase in costs caused by its legalization.

"I believe given all the unfunded mandates the state is imposing on Glencoe, we need to find ways to generate more revenue to protect our residents," said Levin.

Senior Isabella Spiliopolous said, "Having dispensaries in Glencoe could bring in more revenue for the area, but I could understand how people wouldn't want that because they don't agree with the new law passing."

According to the Village of Glencoe website, the Village projects that it might take in up to \$40K in revenue if Glencoe had a dispensary with annual sales of \$1 million. However, forty thousand dollars is only 0.1% of Glencoe's total government budget.

Junior Max Russo addressed the benefits of dispensaries when it comes to mental health.

"I don't know the full

demographics of Glencoe, but I think a marijuana dispensary would be beneficial because many people struggle with mental health issues. A dispensary would be both a source of business and a source of relief for people," said Russo.

While marijuana can be used for mental health reasons, it can also lead to addiction for teenagers as the teenage brain is still developing and particularly vulnerable.

*"[the village] might take in up to \$40K in revenue if Glencoe had a dispensary with annual sales of \$1 million"*

Citow, a clinical psychotherapist discussed the impact of a dispensary on teenagers in the community.

"If the schools are working hard to tell our children and adolescents that drugs are dangerous and harmful and that they should not do drugs, it would be hypocritical for the village to send a mixed message by allowing pot to be sold in town," said Citow.

Many Glencoe residents were happy with the unanimous decision to not allow dispensaries in Glencoe.

"Our children will see that we put their best interests and safety first. They will also see that in Glencoe, we don't compromise

## Library celebrates Sesame Street's 50th

The anniversary was highlighted by a life-size character display

by Grant Feldman

2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the beloved children's show "Sesame Street," which first aired in Nov. 1969. To commemorate the show's anniversary, Librarian Susan Peterson and her colleagues set up a life-size display of characters like Big Bird, Elmo, and Cookie Monster on the library's south wall.

"We were inspired to put up the display just because I think every person in this building at some point, hopefully, had a connection to Sesame Street," said Peterson. "I thought it would be kind of an interesting thing to do. We're going to add a timeline so that you can see the ways "Sesame Street" revolutionized education."

Sesame Street was a hugely influential show when it first aired. It pioneered children's programming and allowed millions of kids — notably, those without access to a proper education — to learn basic concepts like counting numbers and reciting the alphabet.

It also dealt with deeper issues such as death and race, and had the most diverse cast American public television had ever seen.

"They took on issues that most people would say, 'These aren't topics for four year olds,'" said Peterson. "When Mr. Hooper died



The character display is sized to scale, including the 8'2" Big Bird | Towers

they actually called it what it was and did a whole series on that. And they addressed 9/11, they addressed autism, the AIDS crisis and how it affects children if their parents have AIDS, so we thought we would celebrate it. 'Comon, whowouldn't want to stand next to a life size Big Bird?'"

Despite being a passionate fan, Peterson did not fully embrace Sesame Street until she had children.

"When I was little Sesame Street had just started. I remember watching it but I was not a fan. I actually liked the Electric Company because they were infinitely cooler," said Peterson.

"But having children and watching it as a parent with a kid brought on a little nostalgia. 50 years of education

is an amazing accomplishment."

The librarians collaborated to print out life-size renditions of the characters and put them up on the wall in early November.

"[The display] was a collaborative effort between pretty much all the librarians," said Peterson. "[Marc] Garneau was the wizard with making [the cutouts] to scale and putting them together. Big Bird is literally cut down the middle, we had to do that with the color printer because there was no way to make him as big as he needed to be. We tried to do everything to scale. We looked at pictures to compare sizes. For Oscar the Grouch, we figured out how big the can had to be and then scaled his body to fit the estimate. We were very precise."



## Staff Editorial

### Beyond a presentation, we need a change in culture

The N-word presentations in advisery marked the first school-wide coordinated conversation about race since Seminar Day in 2016. The presentations attempted to kick off a worthwhile conversation about how our community deals with racial slurs.

However, it is questionable whether any temporary conversation, whether it be for four hours in a single day or 25 minutes over four days, will impact students in a meaningful way.

These presentations evoked a variety of reactions. Some students felt it was unnecessary. Others thought it was not nearly substantial enough to make a real difference. Both of these reactions indicate that the conversation about race needs to continue.

However, in the weeks since the presentation, there has been little continued discussion. Some students have even claimed to have heard the N-word in the halls more than they had prior to the advisery presentation.

Most of the time we have no idea how to talk about racism in our own community. Some people, not only at NT, may not fully understand the need to tackle these systemic, societal issues, or else simply feel uncomfortable or defensive when it is brought up.

It can feel more comfortable to simply avoid talking about race altogether. However, avoiding or eliminating discussion altogether is unacceptable.

It is good that the school administration is trying to address these issues and start a discussion. It is also reassuring that within the presentation there were references to the overt manifestations of racism that have occurred on both campuses, perhaps hitting closer to home than more general discussions of racism in the United States.

It is critical for us to be willing to look inward and reflect upon the dynamics within our own community. We must continue to have these conversations about race and the other things left unsaid when we talk about our community. However, it is also important to remember that racism is not always as obvious as a scribbled racial slur on a bathroom wall.

Use of the N-word is symptomatic of larger, systematic racism that has always been a part of America and our own community. The North Shore community has such a lack of diversity because of the legacy of redlining, a racist way to keep people of color out of white, affluent suburbs. While the presentations offered a way for students to start discussing racism in advisery, continuous discussion and awareness is necessary.

There is no perfect solution that will open up our school to being more actively aware of racial inequality and the experiences of black students. But there are some steps we can take. Year-round curricula should include lessons about racism in America so students can get used to thoughtfully discussing racism and other complex topics.

As students, we need to build our critical thinking skills, practice empathy and open-mindedness, and learn to feel comfortable with the possibility of having uncomfortable conversations. Grappling with and analyzing racism on a weekly or daily basis may be more impactful than a yearly presentation or seminar.

There are history and English classes at our school that have already incorporated units on American racism, which is a great way for students to deepen their understanding. If this is extended to all humanities classes at New Trier, we can ensure that students are more prepared for complex conversations about and experiences with race in the future.

Rather than avoiding the topic altogether or doing short-term programs, perhaps a more thorough and long-term approach could help. In order to grow, we must seek out information, perspectives we disagree with, and build relationships with people from many different backgrounds.

If discussions of race and other topics are not part of the curriculum, students must work to seek out these discussions outside of the classroom. Students must actively engage in these discussions when given the opportunity, and when these conversations are not happening, we must bring it upon ourselves to say something.

We cannot change or improve what we are ignoring.

## Letter to the editor

I am writing in response to Eva Roytburg's editorial from November 15, 2019, "Teachers need to stop using the N-word". I appreciate the editorial board of the newspaper taking this issue head-on, but I do want to offer a clarification to Eva's piece. It is the policy of the English Department not to read aloud or speak aloud any identity slurs.

Per a memo drafted on 10/31, the practice of the English Department is to skip such slurs in our classrooms when reading aloud, and not to use them during discussion.

That has been agreed to by 100% of the teachers of English on two campuses. I am including the full text of my and Ms. Gompers email to the department on this issue for context; now, I challenge you as a student body to do the same.

Just as we adults must help each other realize the impact of our language and learn what is and is not appropriate, do so with your friends and siblings. Do not let casual slurs go by without challenge or notice in your spaces when adults are not present.

But, as someone who lives in a mixed race home, and endeavors to raise two sons to see the world for all its complexity, I have learned one personal truth. Correcting people is not about pointing your finger at them and telling them they have done wrong; I have found that the surest way to push people away and polarize them, students and adults alike.

Instead, as a friend, I help them see how their language makes others feel. To point fingers and raise voices pushes people away and creates lines of division; instead, I try to bring people into a conversation and explain why language can hurt, and why it has no place in civilized discourse. And then, I am prepared to remind them when they slip up again, as I expect them to do for me. Note, even in Coates' video clip, he uses two slurs orally while explaining why he can't use them. No one is perfect.

We need to remember that accountability is not the same as punishment, and if we can hold each other in cordial accountability, we will achieve more than punishment ever will. If we do that for each other, we will all live in a better world.

- Ed Zwirner, English Dept. Chair

## Nextdoor: The psyche of suburbia



by Katy Pickens

Nextdoor is one of the best social media sites available on the App Store today. This may be confusing, or even counterintuitive for some of you, but I believe there are few sites that can offer the unscripted, ridiculous, wonderfulness that is Nextdoor.

Nextdoor is a social media website for neighborhoods, essentially a Facebook specifically for the North Shore (or any other community). It's the perfect place to find a babysitter, sell your gently-used furniture, promote a charity, or buy Hamilton tickets. There's even a pet directory so you can see all of your neighbors' animals.

I joined Wilmette's Nextdoor community just this year and have not regretted it for a second. The trivial, hilarious forums and posts are enough to keep me entertained for hours. My personal favorite Nextdoor controversy is a simple topic: coyotes.

Anyone on the app is familiar with the coyote epidemic that is currently consuming, if not devastating, the North Shore. There is truly a staggering (and undoubtedly excessive) number of posts related to coyotes. Pictures, street names where they've been sighted, and general concern about the coyote population is bound to be in your Nextdoor feed any time, any day.

The coyote content has gotten so out of hand that it's become a Nextdoor Meme™. A fool-proof way to gain Nextdoor clout is to reference the coyotes - regardless of the content of a post.

I am unashamed to say that nothing makes me happier than a good coyote meme. The glorious trolls of Nextdoor have worked hard to poke fun at our community's antics. My personal favorite coyote-related posts have been pictures of deer and a giant inflatable unicorn and saying they're coyotes. The comment sections are priceless.

Nextdoor is a dazzling addition to our community and I am clearly a fan of its content. Despite the vast majority of posts being lovely and innocuous, every now and then I see a post that is decidedly unacceptable for a neighborhood chatroom.

Nextdoor is meant to be used for babysitting opportunities and iconic coyote posts - not for rumors or problematic and circular arguing. It should not be a forum for gossip or speculation about things as serious mental health or the lives of students.

Last spring, a member of our news staff died. I was disgusted to see a post on the site where several parents made sweeping assumptions about her place at school, her religion, and the reasons for her death. All with a startling lack of knowledge or factual basis for their comments.

I understand the desire to know what is going on at your child's school and concerns that parents were having. However, Nextdoor is not the most appropriate place to be having this conversation (especially when you know so little about what

actually happened).

I have no doubt that the users contributing to these posts had nothing but good intentions and simply wanted to know more for the wellbeing of their kids. But there are certain issues that are better discussed offline than on Nextdoor.

Our school is currently grieving the loss of another student. Students, friends, and, most importantly, the family are mourning.

I was disheartened to see a post about it on Nextdoor the very next morning. Certain topics do not warrant commentary from the entire North Shore online community.

There are important, thoughtful conversations we need to be having with our families, friends, classmates and school officials to improve our community and heal. As big of a Nextdoor fan as I am, I feel confident saying this is not going to happen on the app.

Like with any social media, there can be a desire to talk about absolutely everything and anything going on in our lives, or even the lives of others. Many teenagers have been taught to maintain a thoughtful and careful presence online; the same theory and caution must apply to Nextdoor.

If you wouldn't put it on Facebook or Instagram, or you wouldn't feel comfortable saying it to a group of strangers, it is best to leave it be.

Nextdoor has the capacity to bring our community closer together, promote charitable causes, and boost local businesses. Let it remain as such without dredging up careless gossip or hurtful rumors.

## Instagram should remove likes



by Eva Roytburg

"If you post now, no one will like it."

"So when do I post it?"

"At, like, 9 pm. That's when everyone finishes their homework and is on Instagram."

This dialogue is all too familiar to me, and maybe for you too. Popularity is hardly a new concept for teenagers, but Generation Z-ers, like me, have seen it fester into an entirely new platform-- social media.

When Mark Zuckerberg debuted the "like-button" for Facebook in 2014, he said in a public Q&A that "we need to figure out the right way to do it so it ends up being a force for good, not a force for bad and demeaning the posts that people are putting out there." But he didn't really figure it out, and now us kids and young adults are fighting to battle through the effects of the button's force for bad.

Swipe-and-doubletap culture has enabled a transition from an indication that the post is appreciated to an indication that the post is

acknowledged. And teenagers, transitioning into the age of being taken seriously, have a very strong drive to be acknowledged. Not only do we seek to be acknowledged, we want to be just as or even more recognized than our peers.

Many Instagram users look at the little black number on the bottom of their friend's pictures and then look at their own. A lot of us are putting out pictures which have been highly scrutinized to reflect the best aspects of ourselves, and to not see our efforts indicated in those numbers makes us jump to conclusions.

Someone who doesn't get a lot of likes on one of their Instagram posts can equate the lack of acknowledgment with them not looking good, or the picture being "weird", the caption unwitty.

Someone who consistently doesn't receive as many likes as one of their friends can assume it means people don't like them as much or they aren't as attractive. These feelings are embarrassing and hard to admit, but they aren't trivial, and they have real-life effects on our mental health.

But more likely than not, those assumptions aren't true. Ultimately, while likes can feel like validation, it is simply based on how bright the photo is, how much it stands out, and yes, maybe even what time it is. The whole system has little to do with

the quality of the Instagram user in question, but it takes a lot of self-assurance to truly internalize that.

Much more common is the comparison, the insecurity, the waiting-until-9pm, feelings twisting inside the self-conscious Instagram user. I think most of the kids reading this who have an Instagram can relate to the apprehension of waiting for the number to grow, looking at other people's numbers and pretending it doesn't matter.

If that sounds ridiculous, it is. But insecurity is a hard thing to remove, and likes, as a number, is not. There was a test-run of a version of Instagram for some Australian users, where it would say "liked by @user and others", and one would have to click on the hyper-liked "others" to see who liked the post. There was no number that automatically showed up, so if you wanted to count your likes you would have to go through the list and count each individual person who liked it. Which is obviously a huge waste of time for anyone.

This version of Instagram is best for the platform and for the users of it, especially the younger ones. It maintains all the benefits of likes: users can know who saw their posts, and they can show appreciation (or acknowledgment) of others posts, but there's no number for the world, including you, to see.

## The New Trier News

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# Girls swimming and diving places second at state

Team sends off its seniors in style, gets glimpse of its future

by Connor Caserio

On Nov. 22-23, girls swimming and diving wrapped up their 2019 season with a second-place finish at the state meet.

Held at the Winnetka campus natatorium, this year's state meet tested the Trevians' ability to defend their home pool. They proved more than up to the challenge, scoring 169 team points, second only to repeat-state champion Neuqua Valley's 183. Though Neuqua Valley ultimately won, the Trevians are proud of their strong finish to the season.

"I thought we performed exceptionally well," said Head Coach Robert Guy. "We set eight team records, which has never happened in my tenure as a coach."

The Trevians performed well across the board, but their victory in the 200 yard medley relay stood out. Not only was the relay team's time of 1:40.98 a state record, it was also the fifth-fastest public high school time ever in the event.

"I was very happy with our medley relay because we crushed the state, pool, and team records," said senior Joelle Ohr, who swam the freestyle leg of the relay. "It should

be there for a while."

Apart from this impressive relay time, the Trevians also found success in many other events.

One such event was the 100 yard breaststroke, won by sophomore Kaelyn Gridley. Gridley's prelims time of 1:00.89 was .12 seconds off the state record, and her victory in the finals was crucial to the team's ultimate success.

"It felt great to be able to win the 100 breaststroke because our team really needed to get those [16] points," said Gridley.

Even when the Trevians did not win an event, they still picked up points, which was key to their second-place finish.

In the 100 yard butterfly, junior Greta Pelzek swam a personal best of 54.90 and finished in fifth place, earning the team an important 10 points.

"I did pretty well personally," said Pelzek. "My fly split was over a second faster than it has ever been, so I was proud of that."

Likewise, Trevian divers contributed to their team's second-place finish without winning the diving competition outright. Senior divers Erin McNally and Katie Lipsey finished in third and fourth place respectively, scoring a combined 23 points for the team.

"It felt awesome to place 4th in the state," said Lipsey. "There were so many good divers competing at



The team poses with their second place trophy following state on Nov. 23 | New Trier Athletics Twitter

the meet, and it was really fun to be competing with them."

Another area of success for the Trevians was the Athletes With Disabilities (AWD) portion of the meet. Out of the eight new team records established by Trevian swimmers at the meet, two were set by AWD swimmer Sela Cornell.

Though Cornell did not win any of the four events she competed in, she performed well in all of them. Cornell's highlight of the meet was finishing second in the AWD 100 yard breaststroke finals.

"Two of them [team records] were records for athletes with disabilities set by Sela Cornell, which was pretty amazing," said Guy.

For senior swimmers and divers,

the team's second-place finish at state was somewhat bittersweet. Though they were glad to go out with a strong performance, they found it tough to say goodbye to their team.

"I am going to miss my team the most," said Ohr. "Every girl on the team works for each other, and it is a community that I have only experienced during high school season."

Looking ahead, the future of the girls swimming and diving program is bright. Their strong performance at state this year indicates that the team's many returning point-scorers will improve next year.

"I think this year really sparked a bigger motivation to win state and showed us the potential we have next

year," said Gridley.

Guy noted that improvement from year-to-year has been a recurrent strength for the Trevians' swimming and diving program. Though the Trevians will lose several Senior point-scorers next year, based on the program's history, younger swimmers and divers will undoubtedly fill those roles.

"I think what has made our program so special is that time and again we have younger people who see the opportunity for themselves and step up and make some big improvements between now and the start of the next high school season," said Guy. "So, I'm excited for who is going to step up."

## Boys bowling takes down Evanston

Team picks up dominant victory in midseason match

by Cleo Pool

On Nov. 26, the boys bowling team swept Evanston in a high energy match.

The team started the week with a close loss to their strongest competitor, Vernon Hills, but the boys were able to rally the following day to take down the rival Wildkits.

Junior Max Blake, one of three captains for the team, saw the win as a huge success. He credits no individual, but rather the whole team.

"Our last match against Evanston was by far the greatest achievement of the season. We swept them taking 9 points for the regular season total. Everyone bowled their best, no one person carried the team," said Blake.

Junior and fellow captain Matt Booden agreed with Blake. He saw this match as a great step forward across all levels.

"The Evanston match was a turning point for our season. We were able to clean sweep them on all levels, and varsity averaged over 200 for every game," said Booden.

Blake noticed a large amount of support at the Evanston match. Energy from the crowd motivated the team and really got them working as one.

"Everyone had family and friends supporting us at the Evanston game and everyone was fired up and ready to go. I can't stress enough the importance of support. Everyone was firing on every cylinder," said Blake.

Although bowling is an individual sport, the team aspect is the most important component. The boys rely on each other for motivation and scores. Blake bowled his best of the season against Vernon Hills and Evanston but to him it's more of a team effort.

"Personally I bowled two of



The team huddles before the Evanston match | NT Bowling Instagram

the best days I ever have in these last two matches, but personal bests mean nothing if the team can't make something as a whole," said Blake.

Having two tough competitions back to back wasn't easy for the team, but junior Nick Henner, another captain, enjoys the stress and believes it makes him perform better.

Since the team bowled both nights at Classic Bowl, their home turf, they had the opportunity to learn from mistakes during the Vernon Hill match and be able to use that in the Evanston match.

"In some ways bowling back to back matches helps me, especially when we are bowling at the same alley, because on the second day I can reflect on how the lanes played the previous day and I am already in the competition mindset," said Henner.

Like any sport, it can be mentally challenging when they have many matches and few practices. The team counts on everyone to keep morale high and make sure everyone knows not every match can be your best.

"The best thing to do to get through these kinds of weeks, is to be a team. Support each other and pick each other up. Because bad days happen, and you just have to keep moving," said Blake.

The bowling season moves faster than most sports. Despite only being in season for a little over a month, they are already half way done. Henner has noticed some ups

and downs this season. But overall he is confident in the future.

"We have been bowling really well with a couple of tough losses and I think we can improve even more in the second half of the season," said Henner.

In the boy's first tournament they won the silver division which was a huge achievement early in the season. Along with that, Blake and Booden have both bowled 300s during practice. Junior David Gormanous sees these as two big steps towards success for the team.

"I think some of the team's biggest achievements are winning silver division in our first tournament this season and having two people with 300 games, which is extremely hard for even professional bowlers, so it's crazy to see two juniors do it this season," said Gormanous.

The team is excited for the postseason. It has been a few years since the team has been to state but they are hopeful. The boys think this will be the season they make it because of how different this team is from past years.

"This team is a little different from other teams because it is a much younger squad than in recent years," said Blake. "In the game of bowling it's important to take what you can and improve on what's needed. Most importantly though, is the team. Nothing is more important than the team."

## Girls basketball impresses at season-opening tourney

by Matt Murray

The varsity girls basketball team began their 2019-20 season by winning three of their five games at the New Trier Thanksgiving Tournament held from Nov. 21 to Nov. 29.

Aside from a disappointing 52-37 loss to eventual tournament champion Fenwick on Nov. 23, the Trevians played stellar basketball in their first competitive action of the season, winning their three games by an average margin of 14 points and scoring over 60 points in each of those games as well.

"I think we have done a very good job so far. We do have a lot of new players on the team, so we are still learning a lot and are working hard," said junior forward Liv Becker. "I think a lot of people have stepped up on our team like Ava Zaslavsky and Tina Hong with their leadership."

The reliable senior backcourt of Zaslavsky and Hong guided an effective offensive attack centered around the scoring of the team's two junior forwards, Aiden Casey and Becker, during the Thanksgiving Tournament.

After Becker scored 17 points in a thrilling 64-63 win over Phillips on Nov. 20, Casey led the team in both scoring and rebounding in just her second and third varsity games, finishing with 16 points and four rebounds in a 71-49 win over Warren Township on Nov. 21 and posting a double-double in the loss to Fenwick.

"We have some really athletic post players this year who can not only post up but also pull defenders out [of the paint]," said Head Coach Teri Rodgers. "[Becker and Casey] can penetrate inside and get up the court faster than most players that are going to defend them, so I see those two being key players for us."

The team capped off the tournament with a resounding 79-60

victory over the Taft Eagles on Nov. 29, but their valiant effort against rival Loyola on Nov. 27 proved to be the highlight of the tournament.

Though they ultimately lost 60-53, the Trevians proved to be a stiff challenge for the then-undefeated Ramblers. The team played with relentless energy on both offense and defense, equaling Loyola's nine successful three-pointers and making three more field goals than the Ramblers.

"When our energy and focus is there, I think that we can be a really good team, so it's just a matter of maintaining that energy and focus for 32 minutes," said Rodgers.

While the results from the Thanksgiving Tournament provide reason for optimism, the team still has plenty of room to grow.

With just five seniors on the roster and Becker being the only junior who received major minutes last year, the team will need time to become a cohesive unit and acclimate the new players to varsity-level basketball.

"It can be hard playing with so many new people and the beginning [of the season] was rocky, but within just a few games, the team is already starting to play as one instead of five individuals, so I am excited to see what the future holds," said Zaslavsky.

While the postseason is still months away, the blend of varsity stalwarts like Zaslavsky and Hong and new additions to the regular rotation like Casey seem likely to maintain the winning tradition that has been a staple of the Rodgers era.

"As a team, we hope to continuously get better, to have a good record, and to make a good postseason run. I believe we can be the conference champions as well," said Hong. "We play really good teams, but I think we're ready for every team we play."