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The Spotlight

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The Fall Play: A Preview

Emma Andrus

Since the middle of September, a group of eleven OFHS students have been rehearsing for the fall play, *And Then There Were None*. The play is an Agatha Christie murder mystery in which ten strangers are invited to an island and killed one by one. Christie is known as one of the greatest “whodunit” writers, making this year’s play a suspenseful puzzle that keeps the audience guessing.

The cast includes Alex Holm as Mr. Rogers, Lexy Jensen as Mrs. Rogers, Lizzie Vukovic as Vera Claythorne, Daniel Fidler as Philip Lombard, Justin Andrews as Anthony Marston, Jill Scott as Detective Blore, Jake Wrege as General Mackenzie, Emily Broski as Emily Brent, Cole Zehe as Sir Lawrence Wargrave, Zach Zdanowicz as Dr. Armstrong, and John Munoz as Fred Narracott.

Director Mrs. Cutarelli characterized the cast, saying, “They are a really talented group of students who work very hard, but we also have a lot of fun.”

Senior Lizzie Vukovic exhibited enthusiasm for students to attend: “This is the first mystery Masquers has done



in five or six years, so there’s a new appeal for students to come see it. The cast and crew have all been asked to keep quiet about any incriminating details of the show to keep all of the surprises intact. It has elements of humor, romance, drama, and intensity that we hope keep everyone entertained.”

When asked about the dynamic of the cast, junior Daniel Fidler said, “This cast is playful (pun intended). We’re always trying out new things, having fun, and figuring out our characters in the show. There are interest-

ing characters and a thrilling plot line, and we’ve got some exciting props and set designs. It’ll be a lot of fun both to see and to perform!”

Students, staff, and the community can look forward to seeing the performance on Friday, November 17th and Saturday, November 18th at 7:30 pm. Tickets will cost \$5 for students and \$7 for adults. Please consider attending the play and supporting these extremely talented and hardworking students.

School Board Elections

Abby Gaba

It’s November again, which means an election is upon us once more. Thankfully, this one proves to be less dramatic than the last, as the only things on the ballot are local candidates and state issues. This doesn’t mean, however, that this election is unimportant. Everything on the ballot affects members of the community, and one of the most obvious is the election for members of the Olmsted Falls Board of Education. To students, it may not be clear what the board does, but they affect the school district in multiple ways. Their main role is to set policy for the district, which means deciding what educational programs to implement and how to use funding, among other things. One of the most pivotal issues right now is the role Common Core plays in the school’s curriculum. Common Core has some stigma surrounding it, but many people may not know what it actually is. Common Core is a set of guidelines that was created so the material taught in Language Arts and Mathematics in schools across the country would be consistent for every student. In theory, it is supposed to ensure that all students are learning the same information and receive a sufficient and quality education. There are many people opposed to it, however,



because of fear of federal involvement in education and they feel it takes away creativity from the classroom. This makes Common Core one of the main issues dividing the candidates in this school board election.

There are six candidates on the ballot this year, four of whom are current school board members. These four are Joseph Bertrand, who is the current president of the board, Holly Neumann, Linda Parkowski, and Cynthia Tomasch. Tomasch is being elected for a partial term as she has already begun the term she is on the ballot for, and is unopposed. She was appointed in February 2016 after being voted in by the board to fill a vacant seat. All other candidates are up for a full term. The remaining two candidates in addition to the incumbents are Annette Kocka and Ed Dean. Out of the five up for a full term, three will be elected. Kocka and Dean are running on a very anti-common core platform. Their main arguments against it are that they want the federal government out of education and that the Common Core stifles individual student expression. At the Meet the Candidates night

on October 5, Kocka’s response to being asked why she feels common core hasn’t benefited students was, “Report card grades have dropped since Common Core has been implemented. It is one of our problems, along with unfair teacher evaluations and state tests that students may not take seriously.” This is what many people who oppose Common Core say about it. In addition to Common Core, state testing seems to be a concern of all candidates. Parkowski commented on this matter, “How do we know students are taking the tests seriously? They can answer two questions and not take it seriously from then on.” Parkowski, along with the other current board members up for election, Bertrand, Neumann, and Tomasch, are running as a sort of team, hoping they will all be reelected. It can be assumed that they all have similar viewpoints when it comes to policy decisions. As to their stance on Common Core, they are more accepting of it than Dean and Kocka. If they are re-elected the board will remain as it has been for the past year and most likely so will the types of decisions it makes.

Top Thanksgiving Episodes

Ainsley Allen

With the holiday season creeping up on all of us, The Spotlight decided it would be fun to give everybody a list of TV episodes that best capture the dysfunctional yet heartwarming celebration of Thanksgiving. So, I put on some fuzzy pjs, popped some popcorn, lit a fall candle, and dedicated myself to the world of television Turkey Days. I had a tough time narrowing this list to only five but I tried my best, and I now present to you (in no particular order), five Thanksgiving TV episodes you have to watch this year.

“Gilmore Girls” Season 3

Episode 9: “*A Deep Fried Korean Thanksgiving*”

In true Gilmore fashion, Rory and Lorelai commit to not one, not two, but four different Thanksgiving dinners. They start by making their way from Lane’s conservative celebration with questionable tofurky, to Luke’s typical diner meal. Then, they hastily go over to Sookie’s party, where her in-laws have drunkenly decided to deep fry everything... including the turkey. Finally, the duo makes their way to Lorelai’s parents for an overly fancified affair full of quirky comments and comedic chaos that won’t fail to make you smile.

“That ‘70s Show” Season 1
Episode 9: “*Thanksgiving*”

When Laurie brings a flirtatious friend home with her from college, Eric finds himself in hot water with Donna. Kitty, on the other hand, frets over the impending arrival of Red’s mother, who the kids end up forgetting to pick up from the airport. The stressful holiday is exaggerated in a hilarious way and, with a cast of loveable characters, this episode was an easy one to enjoy.

“The Office” Season 7 Episode 9: “*WUPHF.com*”

The only words you need to know for this episode: hay maze. In hopes of overcoming his disappointment of never being crowned Hay King as a child, Dwight recreates his uncle’s maze in the parking lot of Dunder Mifflin. In the process he manages to lose his love interest, Angela, to Senator Robert Lipton. “The

Office” never really jumped into Thanksgiving episodes compared to other shows, but when they dipped their toe in the holiday for this one it definitely paid off, resulting in a hilarious 21 minutes.

“The West Wing” Season 2 Episode 8: “*Shibboleth*”

In a jampacked episode of the political drama, President Bartlet must decide what to do with 83 Chinese citizens seeking safety from religious persecution who are stowed away on a ship bound for California. C.J. faces her own minor crisis when she is forced to choose which of two turkeys will receive a Presidential ‘pardon’ and which will be eaten, providing some comic relief. Meanwhile, Josh, Sam, and Toby make plans to watch the football game while Charlie is sent out on a wild chase to find the perfect carving knife for President Bartlet to use for Thanksgiving dinner. Phew, I need to catch my breath after talking through that one.

“Friends” Season 3

Episode 3: “*The One with the Football*”

Now, “Friends” is known for their iconic Thanksgiving episodes, so it was difficult to decide which one to include. However, considering that I never stopped laughing and my mom actually came in to check if I was okay, I settled on “The One with the Football.” After watching a football game on tv, the gang decides to play their own friendly game of football. Monica and Ross are forced to reluctantly tell the others that they have not been allowed to play football since Monica broke Ross’ nose in the sixth annual Geller Cup on Thanksgiving years ago. With everyone egging them on, they decide to play anyway. Sure enough Ross and Monica take the game to a whole new level. Long after the game has ended, the rest of the gang retreats upstairs to have Thanksgiving dinner, while Ross and Monica continue to fight over the ball in the dark. I can guarantee that ending your Thanksgiving marathon with this hilarious episode will leave you more than ready for an adventurous Turkey Day.

Ellie’s Pop Culture Corner

Ellie Goetz

Recently, there has been a menacing conspiracy theory around about one of the most popular companies in the world, Google. We rely on this site immensely, and many people can’t think of their lives without it. But, what if Google is being developed to do more things on its own, without humans? Is it going to be able to spy on every single person on the planet? Ideas of this theory came to life when Google began developing maps, google home, and even robots. The company also has access to the Earth’s satellite and image-recognition technology. Why does a “simple” company like Google need to know what we look and sound like? Is this really

necessary? All we use the website for is to look up everyday questions, and now they want to know how we look and talk. This concerns freshman Emma Barnard, who thinks, “I have never thought about this before. The fact that the company can know what I look like is frightening.”

If you are fascinated in terrifying, chilling horror T.V. shows then keep reading. The famous writer, Stephen King, officially has a new horror anthology show, *Castle Rock*, releasing on Hulu. The teaser trailer gives very few conclusions as to what this series is actually about, but it is set in a gloomy New England town, a place where alarming horrifying things

are bound to happen. There are also some well-known actors who have been cast for the show, including Bill Skarsgard, (Pennywise, the clown from *It*) and Sissy Spacek, who was in one of King’s most known movies, *Carrie*. Freshman Fallon Murray is excited for the show: “It sounds like a good show and I’m interested in what this author has in store!” The show was inspired by the book written by King and Richard Chizmark called *Gwendy’s Button Box*. The book was published on May 16, 2017. Although it seems like the perfect time of year for a new nerve-racking T.V. show, it won’t be released until 2018.

Surviving Black Friday

Morgan Ciolek

You wake up the morning after Thanksgiving feeling nice and refreshed, birds are chirping in the air, and the smell of coffee lingers in the kitchen. You look over at the clock and then BAM! It hits you. It’s Black Friday, and you slept in, breaking the number 1 rule of this very stressful day. This day requires a step-by-step plan of action before you even think about walking into a store. To make this hectic day a little bit easier, I’ve outlined a couple of simple steps and tips to follow before you begin to dive into the dangerous world of retail shopping.

Tip 1: Get to the stores early! Everything on Black Friday is first come, first serve so don’t expect that brand new iPhone X to be waiting there for you when you roll up to the Apple store at noon. A few select stores even open the night before so make sure to do some research so you are aware of when you should arrive at each store.

Tip 2: Look up deals online the night before you go shopping so you know what to expect. Going in blindly

is never a good idea, and if you are more prepared for what’s to come then you’ll be able to move in and out of the store more quickly. Some stores, such as Target, mail out Black Friday ad books which list everything that is being discounted. These can be especially helpful if you are looking for a specific item. **Tip 3:** Make tons of lists. Writing down everything that you either want to buy or are even thinking about buying helps you to keep your thoughts organized. Also don’t forget a pen so you can cross out items as you buy them.

Tip 4: Research the fall fashion trends prior to going shopping so you can buy the newest and trendiest clothes. One of the most important parts of Black Friday shopping is doing your research, and when it comes to shopping for clothes in particular nothing changes. If you’re looking for some of the most recent trends but aren’t having any luck, here are some of the pieces that will be making a statement this fall. Florals are no longer just for summer;

dark florals with accents of burgundy and gold are appearing on runways and in stores everywhere. Fringe is also making a comeback this fall season. Something as simple as a fringe skirt or jacket could give your outfit that final touch it was looking for. Large, baggy sweaters are also staying in style this season. A big sweater can easily be dressed down with some leggings and simple boots, or dressed up with some jeans, a scarf or chunky jewelry, and some cute booties. All of these fashion tips are just some ideas to help you know what’s out there, but don’t forget that choosing what you like gives you a chance to express yourself so have fun with it and pick clothes that help show people who you are!

Tip 5: Don’t stress out too much. Get some of your friends together and plan a fun and exciting day because that’s what Black Friday is all about! Worrying over something that happens once every year is not worth the added stress. Make your day something you look forward to and most importantly have fun!

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Kneeling or Playing: Should There Be a Choice?

Andrea Sheetz Jackie Robinson is known for breaking the color barrier in baseball and inspiring further integration in the sport and across America. Despite his love for America's pastime, Robinson had an issue with the song played before every game. In his memoir, *I Never Had It Made*, Robinson writes, "I cannot stand and sing the anthem. I cannot salute the flag; I know that I am a black man in a white world." Since Robinson's first game with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, African-Americans have gained rights equal to those of whites in the eyes of the law. However, this equality does not seem to hold true when applied in society, as many African-Americans still feel discriminated against. This has not gone unnoticed of today's athletes, some of whom have the same thoughts as Robinson and so do not stand for the flag.

From high school games to professional sporting events, Americans of all races, religions, and cultures have sat or knelt during the National Anthem to protest racial injustices and other forms of oppression. One of today's first public figures to kneel during the National Anthem was Colin Kaepernick, who was quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers at the time. When questioned about his actions, Kaepernick explained himself to NFL media: "I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color, to me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way." Kaepernick caused great controversy when he expressed his rights by not standing, and other players have joined him in support.

More recently, Steelers offensive tackle Alejandro Villanueva stood outside the tunnel with his hand over his heart while his teammates chose to stay in their locker room for the playing of the anthem. Villanueva was also in the military, having served three tours of duty in Afghanistan as a captain in

the Army and an Army Ranger. Despite appearing confident in his pregame actions, he apologized for his actions right after this game against Chicago in the press room. According to reporter James Dator, Villanueva knows what the flag symbolizes to veterans but also knows his duty is now to his team, whom he did not support by going along with their decision to stay in the locker room. While he supports Americans' right to protest, Villanueva is embarrassed of the damage his actions may have done to his team's reputation. Should Villanueva have apologized when he had every right not to? This instance reveals the complexity of this issue and how even the players themselves may not be sure of what to do.

The Steelers may have chosen to remain in the locker room to keep the growing controversy from spreading to their team. Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones also wants to protect his organization from the debate: "Too many of the fans of the Dallas Cowboys perceive this (kneeling or linking arms) as disrespect for the flag. And so I don't want our team doing it." Attitudes like this from owners may prevent players from expressing their beliefs because they do not want to face the possible consequences. Kaepernick, for example, has not yet signed with a team since opting out of his contract with San Francisco. He has since filed a grievance case accusing NFL owners of colluding to keep him, and his controversy, from playing for their team.

Kaepernick does not believe it's the question of kneeling that's keeping him from signing with a team, but instead the reason why he does so. In kneeling, he chose to use his public position to speak out against the race issue in American society. While this behavior from players is not new, it is certainly growing. This causes a divide within teams, as the players' social and political views do not always agree with those of the team owners. As seen in the case of Jones and the Cowboys, this disagreement

can lead to the managerial staff telling their players how they can and cannot protest, which some see as a violation of their rights. These actions by the owners are causing this conflict to move from one stemming from the presence of inequality because of race to a matter of the first amendment.

This debate reached a new level when, on September 2, President Donald Trump tweeted that those players who do not stand for the anthem should be fired. Contrary to what President Trump chooses to believe, the NFL Rulebook states, "The National Anthem must be played prior to every game, and all players must be on the sideline for the National Anthem." There is no explicit rule from the NFL requiring players to stand, thus making it unlikely that a player could be fired for not standing.

Unlike the NFL, the NBA does have a rule that requires players to stand for the National Anthem. During a press conference in his office, commissioner Adam Silver reminded personnel of this regulation and said that if faced with a violation, the league "will determine how to deal with any possible instance in which a player, coach or trainer does not stand for the anthem." This unequivocal rule makes it unlikely that the controversy will spread to basketball. NBA players can voice their opinions in other ways, but because of league rules they agreed to, would be subject to consequences if they choose to kneel, sit, or otherwise protest.

This conflict reveals the strong divide within American society. While some may advocate for individual rights, they do not always respect the same rights of those who may disagree with them. Whether or not this is an issue of race, rights, or both, it has escalated to a high level nonetheless. This debate has started a very important conversation in America in regards to who we are, what we stand for, and what freedom means.

The Legend of Witches' Hill

Rihannon Lloyd

With October being the month of Halloween, various spooky events have been popping up all around Olmsted Falls, but there is one legend that many people don't know. All the way in the back of Old Chestnut Grove Cemetery on Water Street, there is supposedly a witch buried near the woods, proof of some kind of witch trials completed in our very own town. This topic is still under debate, as we really don't know what happened. There is no written record on this person and no grave marker, which puts this myth under speculation. The graveyard has already been said to be haunted, and with its odd location and eerie feel, it is no wonder there are creepy myths surrounding it. This legend goes by the name of "Witches' Hill," as the

cemetery's rolling and rocky grounds give it the appearance of a hill.

Another variation of this myth is that multiple accused witches were executed and buried in that one spot, their ghosts haunting the cemetery to this day. It is unknown whether either of these myths are true because neither of them have been proven, despite claims of seeing strange lights surrounding the graveyard at night. The alleged grave is hard to find and takes a bit of searching to locate it. According to the website Dead Ohio, as well as the Ohio Exploration Society, a witch was executed by the tree and was later buried under it, but a grave marker was never erected. However, there was an iron fence placed around it and a marker was hung on

the tree explaining that "horrible things" would happen to whoever came nearby. The fence is no longer there but a few millstone blocks surrounding the grave with small metal spikes remain. There is no sound explanation for this grave, or if the woman accused was actually a witch. But what can be proven is that Olmsted Falls was once part of the Western Reserve, a sect of land given to the settlers of Connecticut to relocate during the Revolutionary War in the late 1700's. Colonial Connecticut and other states around were known for their many witch trials, the famous Salem Witch Trials taking place in the state above, Massachusetts. You can still see her grave today- if you look hard enough- and if you dare to find it, that is.

SADD Success: Red Ribbon Week Recap

Lauren Gumeny

SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) is a school organization with the goal of raising awareness of the dangers of underage drinking, drug use, and other harmful decisions. SADD sponsors Red Ribbon Week, five days of drug-free themes, to persuade high school students to take a pledge to make smart decisions. Red Ribbon Week was incredibly successful at Olmsted Falls this year. It kicked off on Monday, October 23rd with, "If you do drugs you're a 'DUM DUM'" day, where students in SADD passed out Dum Dum lollipops to students. On Tuesday, October 24th, students wore red and members of SADD wore their t-shirts for "STOP doing drugs" day. The members of SADD also traveled to the middle school to do fun activities that promoted safety with the middle schoolers. On Wednesday, students were "too bright for drugs," and wore neon to school. Thursday was "Jersday Thursday" to bring attention to OFHS's many student athletes that drugs have the capability to ruin their education as well as their athletic career. Friday was "Fun Sock Friday," where students wore wacky socks to show that life is too fun to let drugs end it. A SADD member walked around the school on Friday in a grim reaper costume to show statistically how many people die annually from drug abuse. Thanks to SADD, the students at Olmsted Falls are more aware of the dangers of drugs. Red Ribbon Week was excellent this year, and hopefully students will keep their paws off drugs for many years to come!



Gabby and Sara's Sports Report

Gabby Asche and Sara Tonissen

Football: The football team has come out with a bang this season, leaving no sympathy for the other members of the conference. Districts and beyond is all that is on the minds of everyone on the team, as they carry a 7-1 record. Rivals were beat, tough games were played, and plays were executed, which is what has made the team so mentally and physically strong as a whole. Winning has been the mindset since the beginning of the season, especially after an insane game against Midview, one of the team's biggest competitors, as they were blown away by the Bulldogs. Along with the strong win against Midview, the boys also reclaimed the title of champion of the Battle of Bagley Road against nearby Berea-Midpark with a score of 62-49. Claiming this win was a great start to the homecoming weekend and is something that is valued by every member of the school.

Girls Golf: Overall, this season was one to remember for the girls golf team. In the past, the sport has gone under the radar, but the girls on the team this year have made themselves well known, with a 11-3 overall record. The family aspect on the team helped make the group of girls so special this year, unlike in the past. Bouncing off of this, senior co-captain Nicole Egel states, "Whether I was receiving a thumbs up from across a hole or giving one, it was always apparent that we had each other's backs." Holding the title of third place in the conference is something that does not come easily, for hard work from every single member of the team is needed to accomplish this desired goal. Both Egel and Lindsay Rowe led the team as captains, but the

rest of the team held their own with the help of their leaders. Egel states, "It's commonly known that golf is an individual sport, but personally, I would not have been as successful without the girls by my side."

Boys Golf: The boys golf team had a great season this year, which qualified them for districts. Match after match, the Bulldogs gave it their all with impressive skills from the team altogether. Throughout the entire season, the boys captured wins left and right against rivals from other schools. Along with the large number of boys competing, three of the seniors, Logan Bratsch, Sully Kilbane, and Joe Bertrand, came out on top as they joined the other members of the team at districts, truly a great way to end their senior year. The team continues to get better and better each year, which was proven through the events of this season in comparison to the past.

Cross Country: This year's cross country team finished their season strong, with high placing meets throughout the season. Many teammates have grown as runners and have accomplished lifetime records in outstanding ways, revealing the strength of the team as a whole. Senior Abby Simon expresses her excitement from the season and one of the biggest accomplishments of the team this year: "The Olmsted Cup is what the team is known for, and we captured it for another year in our race against North Olmsted." Through the bonds that were created and the successes of the season, the cross country team came out on top once again. At the SWC meet,

freshman Mikayla Ellis finished strong with 11th place overall, along with junior Joe Backus finishing in 9th place overall. As a team, they took home 2nd place overall, a strong ending to the season.

Boys Soccer: The boys soccer season has been amazing for any sport's standards. They won the SWC title, making them back-to-back conference champions and making Olmsted Falls High School history. The team was recently ranked fifth in Ohio for the Division 1 Sport, the highest state ranking the team has ever had. Senior Shelby Edwards also had 14 shutouts, the most ever recorded in school history. The boys have a goal to make it further into the playoffs than last year. Senior Rylan Wikle says, "We plan to finish the season strong and head into the playoffs with a healthy, strong team." The team's biggest accomplishment so far was winning the SWC title, but each member has set the bar high for their post season. This expectation was tested against North Olmsted in the first playoff game of the year. The Eagles got an early goal to take a lead that stood through the first half despite strong attempts by the Bulldogs. Shortly into the second half, senior Kevin Lemin tied it up off a pass from fellow senior Charlie Watters. However, the Eagles responded with another goal. Lemin struck again off a header from senior Ryan Kolonick to once again make it a brand new game. With the game nearing its final minutes, Kolonick knew his team needed some insurance and used the momentum to deliver and take a 3-2 lead. The final 10 minutes saw the Eagle offense working tirelessly to score, but Edwards

and the Bulldog defense denied them any shot at tying or reclaiming the lead. This hard-fought win will carry the team into the rest of the playoffs, where they have the No. 1 seed.

Girls Soccer: The girls soccer team had a great season that was a tough but humbling experience. At the beginning of the season, the girls did not know each other very well, but they worked to improve their relationship. Now, the team has a very positive relationship, with friendships that have grown because of the dedication that each teammate has put into their season. The team's biggest accomplishment was when they won 2-0 against Shaker Heights, a tough team that the girls worked hard to defeat. Junior captain Maddie Boka stated, "The team had great energy and awesome chemistry," when she talked about the win. Boka also mentioned that each teammate has improved since the beginning of the season.

Girls Tennis: The girls tennis team has worked very hard this season to be the best they could be. It was hard to win the tough matches because of the lack of upperclassmen, but everyone worked extremely hard and each teammate improved individually on their skills and techniques. The teammates from the previous year were very close by the start of the season, and the freshmen were able to blend in with the rest of the team. Senior and team captain Abby Gaba talked about the team dynamics and how their season went. According to Gaba, "This was probably the closest team I've ever been on." The team's biggest accomplishment was that many of

the players from the 2016 season moved up to take on tougher positions and have performed even better than last year. Gaba says that she is "very proud of the progress everyone has made."

Volleyball: At the beginning of the season, the Volleyball team had some rough patches but at the turn, the team was able to get out of their funk and surprised many teams. The varsity team had four freshmen on the roster, something that is unheard of, and all the girls had to adjust to the new changes that took place. Senior captain Leah LaPinta talked about these team dynamics at the end of the season. LaPinta stated, "Things are great. My teammates are some of my best friends. It's so incredible because without volleyball, I probably never would have talked to half of these girls, but they are such a blessing." The team's biggest accomplishment was rising to the challenges they faced. The team graduated many great players within the past few years; now the team is mostly made up of underclassmen, and this season was a "rebuilding year" to make the team stronger. Through these trials the girls never stopped pushing themselves and each other to be the best they could be. Recently, the girls entered the playoffs and beat North Ridgerville 2-3, which brought them to a battle against St. Joseph Academy. Riding a strong last half of their season, the girls were willing to fight against this state ranked team. After a power outage and subsequent dance party, the game began. The Bulldogs lost this game 3-0, despite strong efforts to continue their strong season.

Mean Witches

Dylan Briggs

