



# JAGWIRE

Fall 2021 - Issue 2 - Senior Seminar



## Senior Swag

Stressed out seniors suit-up for their senior seminar presentations where they show just how prepared they are for real-world challenges and how they can make a real impact on the future.  
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## JA Volunteer Efforts

The Jaguars volunteer to help support the Alzheimer's Community at the Walk to End Alzheimer's & Mrs. Buechner shares her personal experience with the tragic disease.  
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## Dissection & Dealing

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Exploring student burnout at Jefferson Academy and how to deal with academic pressure.  
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## Perfect Pressure

The Jefferson Academy Varsity Boys Soccer team is still undefeated going into the last game of the season. A look at the pressure of dealing with a perfect season as well as what it means going into the post-season.  
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Suit Jackets, ties, and slacks. Last week Jefferson Academy Seniors scrambled through the hallways dressed to the T in business attire for their Senior Capstone presentations.

A collective sigh of relief could be heard from the senior class as their senior capstone projects and the senior seminar course concluded Wednesday, October 13th after three days of presentations.

This tradition has often brought stress to the senior class as students dread the lengthy paper, job shadow, and presentation.

"It's better than I expected it to be. I heard really bad things about it," said Senior Maya Magallanes.

The senior capstone project comes at the end of the senior seminar course taught by Mr. Thimsen and Ms. Defiore, which prepares seniors for life after high school. All seniors are required to take this course during the first quarter where they learn about important information for adult life that often does not fit into other courses.

"Well in a lot of ways I want them [the seniors] to find out what they want to do and what they don't want to do," said Mr. Thimsen.

They learn everything from how to fill out certain tax forms to writing a college essay. The course concludes with a final paper and presentation on the student's intended career field and their work-study.

Senior Amaya Hargraves-Williams felt that some parts of the course were more helpful than others. "I do feel more prepared now, mostly because of the cover letter and resume. Helping us write those was really helpful."

After last year's senior class spent much of the year online due to the ongoing pandemic, Mr. Thimsen and Ms. DeFiore worked tirelessly to give this year's seniors the full benefits of the course, even as they tailored it for this year's seniors.

"Well, originally everybody had to do a work study, and because of Covid we've only been able to do some.... Kids can do a work study if they could get the work study. So it's changed a little because of that," said Mr. Thimsen.

After high school, students go on to do any number of things. Some attend a 4-year college, some go to trade school, some do a couple of years at community college, some are taking a gap year.

Senior Maya Magallanes feels prepared to begin studying for her career after completing the capstone project.

"I had to do a lot of research because I had to write the 9-page paper, so just learned a lot about the history."

Attending college is a very common choice for students after high school, but many other students have chosen to go into trade school or vocational training instead. Rather than applying to a University, Magallanes intends on applying to Paul Mitchell Beauty School to become a hairdresser.

"I've toured lots of colleges, and I know people in college, and the whole thing just doesn't appeal to me. And touring colleges I just never felt like I could picture myself there," said Magallanes.

Senior Corban Waters plans on studying for a career in law enforcement so he completed a job shadow with the Broomfield and Westminster police departments.

"I think the job shadow is actually a very helpful thing, because you get to, if nothing else, kill a few days of your week when you're bored, and it shows you what goes on in the career and what you may or may not want to do," said Waters.

Although some students feel that they gained a lot from the capstone presentation, others were on the fence about the project and presentation.

"I don't know how necessary it is, to be honest, for life skills. I mean, it's not too bad. It was fine," said Senior Gracia Beach.

Although the senior seminar course is contested amongst the senior class, many students left the class knowing at least a little bit more about life after high school.

"The goal of the senior capstone project is, in a lot of ways, to mentally prepare you for what you want to do in college or in a career but also to do the little things that colleges require," said Mr. Thimsen.



# A Senior Spectacle

by Sophia Krout





# JA SUPPORTS ALZHEIMER'S COMMUNITY

by Ashley Nichols

This year 832 participants carried flowers in memory of those that they lost to Alzheimer's as they participated in the Walk to End Alzheimer's on October 9, and for the first time, JA students were there to help with the event.

Jefferson Academy's National Honor Society volunteers at many places throughout the year. Over the weekend they went to CU Boulder and volunteered at the Walk to End Alzheimer's. NHS helped with the set up, clean up, and everything in between. Not only did they help with the festival itself, but they also got to see it in action.

"This opportunity started out as a way to help Mrs. Buechner and turned into helping the Walk to End Alzheimer's volunteers as a whole. This year, it's especially crucial for us to get involved with our community in ways like this," remarked Emily Lighthart, NHS President.

ones have it," noted Mrs. Buechner.

It was a great turnout with many people participating in the festivities. On top of that, there were so many volunteers from Jefferson Academy that attended as well, many of them even participating in the walk themselves. Despite the windy day, the scenery up in Boulder made it worth it to all of the people who put in the time to come.

"The walk was a great turnout in my opinion. Despite the wind, I think that everyone had fun," said Adelynn Grip.

Before the walk, which started at 10am, there was an opening ceremony. It was extremely heartwarming for everyone there and especially emotional for those attending who have family members with the disease.

At the ceremony, there was a man who even sang a song for his mother who has Alzheimer's.

"It was really beautiful and it touched the hearts of a lot of us," said Skyla Rogers.

People swarmed the starting line and walked the trail that twisted throughout the CU Boulder campus. People appeared to have had fun when they finished and looked happy as they crossed the finish line.

It was clear the impact the event had on the participants was

a positive one.

"As an honor society, I think it's incredibly important to be involved with our community at large, and participating in a Walk to End Alzheimer's does exactly that. People all over the world are affected by this disease, and I think we as the NHS are able to make an impact on our community by participating in it," noted Emily Lighthart.



The Alzheimer's Walk raises funds for research to find help for those with dementia and memory loss. The research also paves the way for a potential remedy. On top of helping the victims of the disease itself, it also helps the families affected by the disease.

"It funds research for Alzheimer's at the same time as providing resources to families whose loved

# MEMORIES AND PASSION

by Rhea Alexander

People are made up of memories. From the happy moments that make you laugh to the sad ones that make you cry, each and every memory plays a role in building the personality of a human being. Now imagine slowly losing all of your memories, or gradually losing who you are as a person.

This terrifying possibility is the haunting reality for those who suffer with Alzheimer's disease. This fatal form of dementia affects millions across the globe as well as their families. Currently, more than 62 million American adults 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's is a disease that takes a toll on the patient as well as their loved ones.

School librarian Mrs. Buechner is one of many that has been personally affected by Alzheimer's disease. In February 2020, Mrs. Buechner's mother passed away after battling Alzheimer's for fifteen years.

"I feel very passionately about this cause and beating this awful disease so that no one else has to lose a loved one like this," states Ms. Buechner.

Mrs. Buechner channels her passion for beating Alzheimer's disease by partaking in the yearly Boulder Walk to End Alzheimer's. She has been involved with the Boulder walk for three years now and is also part of the planning committee through the role of logistics co-chair.



"This is my way of being involved," expresses Mrs. Buechner. "Instead of having Alzheimer's take something away from me, this is my way to try to give back and help other families who are impacted."

Mrs. Buechner found her way to give back through the Alzheimer's Association, which is a non-profit organization that raises funds for research and provides assistance for families affected by the disease. After her mother's diagnosis, Mrs. Buechner was able to find a support group for children of Alzheimer's patients. Through her support group, Mrs. Buechner found other members of the Boulder Walk to End Alzheimer's committee and was invited to join.

"When your loved one is dying, it is a very lonely place to be," reflects Mrs. Buechner. "The support group was very helpful because it helped me find a

community that was going through the same thing I was."

This year, students from both the Jefferson Academy Key Club and National Honor Society volunteered to help set up and coordinate the Boulder Walk to End Alzheimer's.

"I am so thrilled to have JA students be there for the walk," exclaims Mrs. Buechner. "It just makes my day and makes me proud to have Jefferson Academy students help out."

# JA RETURNS TO OUTDOOR LAB

by Asha Stephens

Jefferson Academy Secondary students were reliving their sixth grade Outdoor Lab experience two weeks ago, but this time as leaders and assistants. The sixth grade community and the high school volunteers went up to a camp called IdRaHaJe in Bailey, Colorado. One group of upperclassmen volunteered Monday and Tuesday while a second group volunteered Wednesday and Thursday.

Junior Judah Weir says he chose to volunteer at Outdoor Lab because he enjoyed his experience there as a sixth grader. Fellow junior, Sofia Hiller, did not go to Jefferson Academy's

Outdoor Lab in her sixth grade year, but went last month to check out the campus and have fun nevertheless.

The volunteers mostly spent time with the kids in between activities and being another pair of helping hands for the counselors at the camp. "It was really cool getting to know some of [the kids]," Sofia says.

When not actively participating in Outdoor Lab activities, Judah and Sofia enjoyed spending time with other volunteers. Sofia enjoyed when the group sat together one night and sipped hot cocoa.

When their time at Outdoor Lab

was finished, the volunteers arrived at school, midway through the week, feeling worn out. "I was definitely tired because I didn't get very much sleep while I was up there," says Sofia.

The volunteers also felt the pressure of catching up on missed school days. "I had to catch up on a lot [of work] and I was very tired, so [it was] definitely an overwhelming experience," comments Judah.

Despite being tired afterwards, the volunteers definitely had fun at Outdoor Lab. "It was cool," reflects Sofia, "and I want to do it again next year!"



# DISSECTING LEARNING

by **Madeline Leyba**

From learning from a picture to hands-on experience, Mrs. Thimsen's biology classes spent most of the last couple weeks literally learning the ins and outs of pig anatomy. Pig dissections were a big part of biology for most students. Due to Covid, last year most of the students were unable to perform the lab, leaving this year to be the first year of dissections since spring semester 2019.

While dissections sound unappealing to the queasy stomach, there is actually a lot to be learned from them. Mrs. Thimsen says "most students are glad it happened" even if they were uneasy about it before. Students get the chance to learn about anatomy through a hands-on experience.

Pig dissection came to JA about 7 years ago through Mrs. Thimsen, who minored in anatomy in college. Mrs. Thimsen said she "wanted to bring it to the curriculum because I do think it's important. I think it's a great

way for them to see biological organization up close and personal." Before Mrs. Thimsen, JA did not do many dissections.

Mrs. Thimsen chose pigs to



dissect because some of their anatomy closely resembles that of a human. It is a good way for students to see anatomy similar to their own.

With years of classes dissecting pigs, some pretty interesting things have happened. From finding creative ways to get to the brain, to passing out, the lab

never gets boring.

With dissections come reactions. Students typically either dread the dissection or can't wait to partake in the activity.

Mrs. Thimsen says the most common reaction before the dissection is dread, saying, "I often tell them, you don't know what you don't know yet" as a way of reassuring the students.

Afterward is a different story. Thimsen comments, "Some are really excited and think it's really cool, then there was those who were grossed out by it... You really get a wide variety." There are also students who think that they will enjoy it but end up dreading it as well as vice versa. Overall, many students react differently after the dissections than they do before. The experience is really one that differs from person to person.

Overall, the dissections are a great way to learn about anatomy hands-on and gain experience. While some students might be hesitant, most are glad for the experience in the end.

# LIVING AND LEARNING

by **Tori Westbrook**

It won't be zombies and "The Walking Dead" for Halloween, but there will be some bodies that a few JA students will encounter.

Ms. Brackeen's anatomy class will be taking a trip to Red Rocks Community College on October 28th to visit a cadaver lab to research and experience the medical field in their own way.

Cadaver labs are made to help students understand the organs and systems of the body using bodies donated to science. "I am very excited. I have never been to a cadaver lab before so it will be a first for me as well! The reaction from my class was overwhelmingly positive, so I am thrilled I can give them this opportunity," said Ms. Brackeen, the teacher of this anatomy class.

"I took Anatomy & Physiology in college and fell in love with the subject. Science has a special place

in my heart and I was truly overjoyed to be able to share this passion with my students," Ms. Brackeen explains. Many of her students feel the exact same passion for this science.

Shaelee Torres, a sophomore in Ms. Brackeen's anatomy class, explains why she's excited to go to the cadaver lab. "We can draw them [the bodies' systems] and learn about them but none of those things compare to real life."

People may question what the purpose of a cadaver lab is. "Throughout the semester in Anatomy, we are learning about all 11 body systems. When Mrs. Thimsen first told me about her trip to the lab a few years ago, I knew my class would love it! It is going to be a great review of all of the topics we have learned this year. I believe hands-on experience will be a practical way for my students to see if they want to pursue a career in the medical field," Ms. Brackeen says.

# FEEL THE BURN

by Mackenzie Estep

After taking the PSAT, some may be wondering with the end of first quarter behind us, many JA students are experiencing burnout. Some students are feeling unmotivated and struggling to keep up with their work and grades. Others are just feeling tired and stretched too thin with their challenging schedules, clubs, social lives, and after school activities.

“As a student I would describe a burnout as not having any motivation to do your schoolwork because you are so stressed out you feel it is pointless. Most of the time there is homework given in every class for students. This can lead to students

not getting enough sleep and then they are exhausted and still have to go school the next day. It is a process that repeats itself which leads to the student feeling physically exhausted and mentally drained,” said Madisyn Dechant.

Student burnout is very prominent at Jefferson Academy right now due to the fact that this year is the first year students are back to normal school with a bigger workload. COVID and online school changed everything, so getting back into the routine of school can be very tiring.

“I have honestly been feeling burnt out the entire school year, I am not used to being back at school. It’s been 18 months since a lot of us, including me, have been in the building. I am not used to my classes and the change in the amount of work is difficult,” said Sophomore Olivia Saenz.

The main contributor to causing the tired and extensive feeling of burnout is the stress of school. Many students have challenging academic schedules, along with many other clubs and activities. Now that things around school are happening such as sports, clubs, and other events, students want to be a part of them, but attending these can take up a lot of their time for homework. Especially since there is a lot more homework this year compared to last year.

“I think so many JA students are experiencing student burnout currently because as the quarter nears the end, many people are having to finish up big projects and papers that take up lots of time and effort for multiple classes,” said Sophomore Freja Hampton.



School days can be tiring, being around everyone all day, working for four blocks straight. Before, students got used to having breaks in between and during classes, and having a lot of work time for homework in the classrooms. Now homework that is assigned purely for completion outside of school is a lot more common, meaning students have to spend more time finishing work at home. This can be hard for some students who have after school activities and have less time to work on their homework when they get home.

“The amount of homework and the time it takes have really been stressing me out lately. I personally do not have much time to work because I have volleyball after school for two hours, so that takes up a lot of my time and I do not get home until later, and I do not have very much time, and that makes it difficult,” said Saenz.

Some students feel that being exhausted from burnout can have a negative effect on their schoolwork and grades. They have less of a desire to do the work to the best of their ability, and are doing the work solely for the purpose of getting it done. They also feel that burnout caused procrastination to become very prominent with the students at JA.

“I think feeling burnout affects your schoolwork tremendously. If a student is feeling a burnout then the motivation for doing the work is not really there anymore. It leads to the students caring less on how they do on assignments and their grade in general. When I feel burned out I feel like I just need to get the assignments done, whether or not they’re good, because it would get it off my plate and I wouldn’t have to worry about it anymore,” said Madisyn Dechant.

There is no true cure for student burnout. Students just need to take the time to get used to their new schedules and the workload of school. The upcoming breaks and schedule changes coming with the new quarter will allow for them to take a breather, and hopefully release some stress before the start of new classes.

“I think over time we will be able to get into the swing of things and figure stuff out. The breaks coming up will also be beneficial and help my burnout a lot, I am really looking forward to those. We honestly are just trying our best to keep up, hoping that it will get better soon,” said Saenz.





# OUT OF MY SWAMP-INTO OUR JUNGLE

by **Madeline Leyba**

I thought love was only true in fairytales, but it turns out it's just as easy to fall in love with a show. From film to stage adaptation, JA's theater department will proudly put on a production of the esteemed classic *Shrek (The Musical)* during quarter two.

*Shrek* is a story well known by many and while the stage adaptation varies from the original script, it still depicts the story of the beloved characters. I can guarantee that I'm not OGRE-reacting when I say *Shrek* is going to be a show to remember.

Musical theater has been a class offered and loved by many. While junior high has been involved in the past, this specific show will only be open to high school students who would like to join.

The costumes for this thrilling production are going to be rented and the set will be created by the B-block stagecraft class. This class will work on creating and designing set pieces for the show and will potentially have the chance to help with the technical aspects of the show during productions.

As far as the actual show goes, there are 4 performance dates planned this year. At the moment, they are scheduled during the second week of December, although with COVID, final dates are still to be determined.

Students in the theatre class will be required to participate in each production as it will take the place of a written final. Other than the final performances and a potential Saturday rehearsal, the majority of the show will be rehearsed and critiqued during class time. Students will have prior notice of any out-of-school rehearsals well in advance.

Junior Finn Brunson says "one thing Ms. Grace is really cracking down on this year is making

sure people will actually show up." So if you are interested in having fun on stage, make sure you have the time to commit, as it is crucial to have a well-rehearsed show with all its cast members present.

*Shrek (the Musical)*, while similar to the movie, has some notable changes. Not only are the movements and reactions tailored to a stage adaptation, but the fairytale characters also make a voice for themselves. This allows more students to join and portray characters such as Pinnocchio, the Duloc soldiers, and even Lord Farquaad himself, and might I say, men of Farquaad's stature are in **SHORT** supply.

One good thing about having many characters in a show is that not everyone has to sing. So if you are looking to get involved in acting and don't fancy singing in the show, there will be perfect parts for you.

The class is open to all high school students, no previous experience required! Finn Brunson recommends "going through the show [on Netflix] beforehand." It is always helpful to know the characters before going out for a role, and Netflix is the perfect place to watch the show to do just that.

Sophomore Abby Jett wants everyone to "go in knowing it's a friendly environment" and "it's not the end of the world if you mess up."

Chances are there will be students who wish to participate but can't take the class. If that is you, you're in luck! Opportunities outside of the class include participating in the drama tech team. The tech team typically takes care of most of the technical aspects of the show such as blocking, set moving, lighting, and sound, and so much more. Both the stagecraft and musical theater classes have a fee of \$5 to cover make-up and building costs. Be sure to contact Ms. Grace if you are interested.





# MUSICAL MASTERY

by Rhea Alexander

The spotlight is on you. The crowd goes silent and you play your first chord. Note by note, you begin to lose yourself in the music. Everything but you and your instrument falls away, and you are transported to a world of your own.

If this sounds like it could be you, Tri-M Music Honor Society is the place for you. The open and accepting society is the right club for music enthusiasts. Tri-M is a place for students to express themselves through the art of music. Whether you are a budding novice or a talented expert, Tri-M has a space for any level of skill.

“If you enjoy music and enjoy playing music, Tri-M is a place for you to find community,” says Tri-M officer Emma Brazzell.

Over the past few years, Tri-M Music Honor Society has lost a significant number of members due to graduation and the pandemic. At the moment, the club has a total of 4 members and is actively trying to recruit more JA students. In order to increase club membership, Tri-M has proposed weekly jam sessions. During these sessions,

students could get together after school, hang out, and play some music.

“We have been trying to integrate more casual events so that people are more willing to participate,” comments club president Brendan Stonecypher.

“We are a music honor society, and there are obligations that come with being a part of our community,” explains club officer Sarah Nunnally.

Tri-M Music Honor Society is a club that provides the opportunity for musical growth. If you have any interest in joining this community of music lovers, talk to club president Brendan Stonecypher or Ms. Grace. If you are looking for a place to learn, connect, and build your musical skills, Tri-M Music Honor Society is the place to be.

“Tri-M is really not as intimidating as it seems,” shares Stonecypher. “We are all just learning and growing together.”

## SYMPHONIC STRIFE

by Ashley Nichols

Jefferson Academy has many different clubs, classes, and associations for students to join. There’s art, theatre, books, games, and even many academic clubs, all of which are very important and fun to the students at the school. In addition there are classes such as band. Band provides the opportunity for many student musicians to perform, but some are also excluded because of the type of their instrument.

These excluded instruments are the string instruments, which are normally played in the orchestra rather than band. Unfortunately, Jefferson Academy does not have an orchestra.

“Using an outside source for an orchestra, because my instrument is not in band, can be frustrating so it could be beneficial,” said Alton Peacey.

String instruments are not supposed to be in band, which consists of mostly wind instruments. Those students who play string instruments are then left out and cannot have the same fun that those in the school band have. Whether or not the music is good or bad, it is still an experience that all musicians should have at some point in their school lives.



“I think that having an orchestra, or something like that, at the school would be fun,” said Peacey.

An orchestra could be beneficial for music players. With the help of an orchestra, string players could have a place to play music with other musicians like them. On top of that, certain band instruments, such as flutes, clarinets, and French horns could also participate in the orchestra since they are instruments found in many symphonies.

“I love the orchestra, but student demand and how many people can be in it is what it depends on,” said Ms. Grantham.

Although an independent program may still be a ways off, some students see other solutions. “If it could be combined with band, I think an orchestra would be fun,” says Senior Brendan Stonecypher. “It would start off small but turn into something cool.”

# PSSTTT...PREP FOR PSAT & SATS

by Asha Stephens

After taking the PSAT, some may be wondering what's the point of taking it. For underclassmen, the true SAT isn't for another year, at least.

But the importance of the test, as Vice Principal Mrs. Porreco says, is to become familiar with the test's directions and answering the questions. "The more familiar you are with the question formats, the more comfortable you'll feel when you see similar questions on the actual test," says Porreco.

Even though colleges are placing less emphasis on SAT scores for applicants, juniors could still qualify for the National Merit Scholarship when taking the PSAT and National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT & NMSQT) last Wednesday, Oct. 13th. "They're still important benchmarks," states Porreco.

For underclassmen, the importance of taking the PSAT is to practice and become familiar with the test, especially with trickier parts such as the student-produced response section on the math portion of the test. "Just knowing how to take the test is half the battle," says Porreco.

Juniors, though, have the SAT approaching in the spring. To help with studying, Mr. Purcell is offering an SAT Prep class in Second Quarter in D

Block.

Mr. Purcell says that the class is beneficial because it focuses on each of the three aspects of the test: math, writing and language, and reading. Along with this, the class dives deeper into test taking strategies.

Students can also benefit from taking practice tests, which are included in the course, and learning from past PSATs. "You are able to go over your answers and see what you got wrong, and look at the answer explanations; you can actually learn from the test itself," comments Purcell.

Students taking the SAT in the spring can also be "reading something challenging everyday" to prepare for the different types of texts presented on the test, said Mr. Purcell. The purpose of this, he added, is to "understand how a text works," a skill being measured on the test.

Purcell recommends that students take the class, especially if they would like to improve their current PSAT score or match the scores of fellow applicants to the colleges to which they wish to apply.

"There are ways that you can practice and prepare on your own, but the class gives you a dedicated space to be able to do that," says Purcell.

## EUROTRIP JA STYLE

by Memphis Larson

Explore the streets of Paris, travel on the famous TGV train to Monaco, and venture through the Italian countryside to Rome. Imagine seeing the things you may have learned about in history class in real life, from the Colosseum to the Louvre and the famous paintings that reside within, all with your classmates and perhaps friends.

Each year, a group from the school's senior class is sent to Europe on a journey across France and Italy, seeing all sorts of historical landmarks as well as being immersed in the culture of a foreign land. It is an optional trip, but there are many benefits expressed by the organizers. From academic credit to a once in a lifetime opportunity to travel abroad with your friends, there are many reasons why students might consider this trip worthwhile.

Enrollment for the class of 2023's trip began in October 2021, even though the trip is expected to be in February 2023. History teacher Eric Thimsen, an experienced staff member in terms of the trip, held an informational meeting where parents and



students could learn more about the trip, including the cost. Students, such as junior Mason Larkin, reviewed the basic information of the trip and are beginning to make up their minds on the worth of the trip.

"I think the cost is worth it," stated Larkin "They said the cost would be lower if not similar to doing it myself, so why not? It seems like a good time."

The list of reasons to go is short and sweet compared to the list of reasons why students might not be able to go. Junior Sean Kullman does not plan on going due to an uncertain future, in terms of school selection, and the significant cost of the trip.

"Yes, I would want to go if I could," said Kullman. "I've never even been out of the country before and I've been interested in Europe for a long time."

Generally, the Europe trip seems to have an appeal to a lot of students. The idea of the trip, with perhaps past experiences to Washington D.C. and New York with the school, seems to please a lot of students, but the value of the trip is different for everyone.



# PERFECT PRESSURE

by Gianna Gagliano

The pressure of an undefeated season weighs heavily on the backs of the boys' soccer team. With one of the best starts in the school's history, the boys' varsity soccer team is 13-0-1. This undefeated season so far may be the demise of the team or it may be a blessing, only time will tell.

Going for an undefeated season, the Jags have faced some very tough and not-so-tough opponents over the season thus far. Only conceding very few goals really displays this team's talent. However, without having a loss



we can find what our weakness is and fix it before this next game."

An undefeated season also means a big chance for a state championship. However, it all depends on who rises up and aids the team in the success that has been so prevalent recently. The support of teammates may be one of the main reasons for the



on the scoreboard, the immense pressure may start getting to the team because of the target that has developed on their backs.

"We are trying to keep it, but everyone is gunning for the #1 spot in 3A boys' soccer," says sophomore swing player Jacob Brackney when asked about his feelings about keeping the undefeated season. "We need to get the fact that we may not be the best, but we are playing our best every day so everyone will get better into our heads."

The pressure may be becoming too much, but it is not nearly enough for the team to lose their drive to win. The goal of the team is to continue the season without conceding a large number of goals and keeping their stellar record. However, a break from

the pressure seems much needed to focus on what the team could achieve and improve upon.

"I think the pressure is good," states Jacob Brackney, "but we could use a little break from it. I think the main thought is just what can we do better for the next game against Holy Family. Having this long break before the next game is better because

we can find what our weakness is and fix it before this next game."

An undefeated season also means a big chance for a state championship. However, it all depends on who rises up and aids the team in the success that has been so prevalent recently. The support of teammates may be one of the main reasons for the

accomplishments of the team so far and they hope it takes them all the way to the state championship.

"I think we have a fighting shot for State," says sophomore Jacob Brackney, "but if we do make it to State, it will be by our hard work and seeing who can carry the team through blood and pain."

The support from the fans of the team may also be helpful for the success of the team. So coming out to support them while trying to gain a state title is a good idea! The team finishes up the regular season against Metro League opponent Lutheran on Friday, October 22.



# SWINGING THROUGH

by Mackenzie Estep

Volleyball is in the homestretch. The players are working together to persevere through the end of the season and finish strong.

The volleyball season is three-quarters of the way through and the teams are starting to prepare for some of the final tournaments and possibly the league finals. The Varsity team is currently ranked 4th in the Metro League. The league standings for the teams are 5-4 for Varsity, 5-4 for JV, and 4-4 for C team. The Junior High B team also went undefeated in their season and won their post season tournament.

“I think that this season has gone pretty well. We’ve played some really good games and have been able to keep up with some of the best teams in our league. It’s been awesome to have fans cheering us on since that wasn’t a possibility last year,” said Ari Kozlowski, C team and JV player.

Varsity’s main goal at the moment is to get into the finals and be invited to the postseason games. The league tournament is supposed to happen at the end of October and it will most likely be a challenging one for the Varsity team. Their current standings are high enough to make it to the playoffs and post season games, but it all depends on the next couple of matches.

“As of right now it looks like we’re probably the 4th best team in the league. Lutheran is the dominating team right now but Faith Christian and Prospect Ridge are also playing at a pretty competitive level. We haven’t played too many league games so far so I don’t know what all of the teams look like but I think we have a chance at doing fairly well in the tournament,” analyzed Jessie Schaffer, Varsity Player.

The players have been working hard to improve throughout the season. The players say that most

practices are spent on fundamental skills such as passing and hitting. At this point they have found a good rhythm playing with each other and now are trying to focus on improving on specific skills and becoming a better and stronger team together.

“For the rest of the season, I want to improve mostly on my hitting and passing. I want to be able to hit and receive harder balls and control them. The great thing about volleyball is that you can always get better and improve on fundamentals,” states Ari Kozlowski.

The number of players this season has been fewer than other seasons, and over the course of the

season the number of players has deteriorated for various personal and academic reasons. This shortage of players has opened opportunities for swing players that switch between playing different positions and on different teams. Ari Kozlowski is one of these swing players and has been for the majority of the season.

“Being a swing player has been really fun. It has allowed me to meet some new people and play with people I wouldn’t have been able to play with otherwise. It also allows me to become a better volleyball player since I am playing multiple games a week. I’m just glad that I got the opportunity to play up and be part of two different teams.”

With the season almost at a close, the teams are looking to end it

with a bang, and continue to get better for next season. They are hoping to move on throughout the program with better seasons in years to come, and be prepared for future matches, while still having fun and building friendships on and off the court.

“I’m excited for more game time and the chance to get better as a team for next season since we don’t have a ton of seniors this year,” stated Jessie Schaffer.

