



Pookie or Dookie?

Take cover! Cupid is returning to town soon, and high schoolers are either embracing the day of love or dreading it.
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Lovely Locks

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Pookie or Dookie?

By: Abigail Stephens

Take cover! Cupid is returning to town soon, and high schoolers are either embracing the day of love or dreading it.

You may have plans, or you may be trying your hardest to pretend it's just a normal day, but it's an undeniable fact that February 14th is just around the corner.

"I really like it," admits freshman Kenya Larsen. "It's a cute little holiday whether you have someone or not." Larsen is one of the few kids who appreciates the meaning behind the holiday and not the drama associated with it.

"I like it, actually," Ayda Voyer confesses. "It's nice when you have someone to be with, but I don't really like how the stores put out the Valentine's Day stuff in December." Stores stocking up on holiday merchandise is unavoidable. However, the real treat is the day after Valentine's Day when all the goodies are fifty percent off.

"Valentine's Day is a nice day," stated junior Cameron Burris. "I feel like a lot of people just recognize that it's there but they also don't really care."

Some kids truly don't care, seeing the holiday as a hindrance, while others just pretend to not care. Many students have expressed that they brush off the holiday because they aren't romantically involved with anyone.

However, Valentine's Day can be spent with friends, appreciating the other relationships in life, treating yourself, or just watching the couples' drama around you.

"[My favorite part] is just spending it with friends rather than actually spending it with a boy or something," admitted Sofia Garioto, while standing near her group of friends, causing them to grin back at her.

"I think [Valentine's Day] is a nice thing to do," expresses sophomore Vinam Hoang. "[My favorite part] is the gift-giving, and [my least favorite part] is the couples."

Hoang is not the first, nor the last, to mention the couples. Sometimes, the public displays are a bit much, a bit gross, or just so sappy it

makes you cringe at the feeling of second-hand embarrassment.

"[My favorite part] is getting chocolate," explains sophomore Brynn Sorice. Like Hoang, Sorice's least favorite part about Valentine's Day is "the couples."

Garioto laughs at her friend's comment, adding, "I can't really say that, I'm in a relationship." Garioto then explains her least favorite part of Valentine's Day is "the pressure to spend a lot of money," which is understandable since most high schoolers rarely have more than a few bucks in their wallet at any given time.

"I like Valentine's Day," commented freshman Isabella Ayala. "Although, I don't like the swehearts that are really hard with the words on them." She means Conversation Hearts, a staple of Valentine's Day, along with chocolates, teddy bears, and roses.

"It's there," explains junior Caden Fenimore.

"I don't have a reason to celebrate it because, well, I'm single still." Like many other high schoolers, Fenimore barely notices Valentine's Day.

"It's useless," complains junior Charlotte Harrold. "I mean— why?!" She is one of the many high schoolers who absolutely detests the day dedicated to love. "I don't know, I ignore it. It's just another day."

Harrold is not the only one who does their best to ignore the holiday, including those who pretend to not even notice it.

"I don't really care about it," shrugged junior Holden Gillings. "[The couple drama] is kind of funny sometimes." Of course, there's more to the day than that for Gillings. "My favorite part is doing nothing all day."

Whether you're spending time with your "pookie," appreciating your friends, or indulging on cheap chocolates, Valentine's Day is a (somewhat) welcomed break to the normalcy of things. From your peers at the JagWire, we wish you a Happy Valentine's Day.



What Do You Want to Be?

By: Jordan Leschuk

Air blowing through the halls, stomping obnoxiously up the stairs, students yelling. This is the sound of career day causing all the students to rush to see the careers of their interests. It is some students' favorite day of the school year because it gives a chance to learn about the background of the careers you see everyday.

"I think it's fun and it's a way to see what other people do," says freshman Riley Kaffine. "Also, it is fun to see the other parents at this school because they come here, so I think that's pretty cool." Sophomore Reese Linton adds, "I think career day is a really important day, because if you're not sure what you want to do as a career, it's a really great way to explore opportunities and find new jobs that you may never have thought of before." Jayden Bilby, a junior, continued, "I definitely enjoy it. It is helpful, and it is [also] helpful for middle schoolers to find out what they want to do in the future."

Every year JA has 20 adults come and tell the students about their career. In the past they have heard about anything from technology and coding to farming and agriculture. However, many students want some new careers that haven't

been present in past career days. These careers include first responders.

"This year I would like to see more first responders," says Bilby.

"I am interested in being a 911 dispatcher when I am older." Senior Sophie Kent added, "I'm hoping that we will get a paramedic at the school this year because that's what I want to be and I want to be able to hear about it from a paramedic's point of view."

To most students this day is a very important day because it can help them make the decision of what career path they want to pursue.

"I think it is beneficial to the students here," says Linton. "JA is a college prep school, so every student is very focused on finding a good college, and after a good college, you need a good career." Bilby continued, "I think it is very beneficial to the juniors and seniors and for the underclassmen and it is helpful so they can get an understanding of how the job works without an internship when you are younger."

After career day most students leave with a great understanding of what career they want to pursue.

"I just think it's interesting to learn about new careers," Kent said, "I already know what I want to go into, but I just think it's cool to hear about what other people do and how they do it." Bilby added, "Personally, I walk out with an open mind that I don't have to stick to one career, but I get a better understanding of the outside world and opportunities."



Return Flight

By: Hannah Strumpher

While Colorado's temperatures were dropping, Florida was both humid and warm for the students and teachers who went on JA's annual Florida Trip.

Along with Ms. Babcock, several students stayed in both Miami and Orlando, Florida from the 10th until the 17th of January.

"It was one hour and thirty minutes going to Austin, and then we had a layover," freshman Trevor Nichols recounts. "Then, we went to Miami, and that was about two hours after that."

With a jam-packed schedule, the students were definitely kept busy from the morning until the evening.

"We would usually wake up around six to seven o'clock in the morning," Nichols says. "Then go down to the free hotel breakfast and get on the bus around eight or nine o'clock, and then we went to the activities. I would say we usually got back around 8-9 pm."

The activities ranged from going to a museum to visiting Universal Studios, which was the highlight of the trip for many.

"We went to the beach and the Kennedy Space Center, which was really cool," sophomore Eva Richling remembers. "We also went to Universal, an aquarium, and a museum. We went to Disney Springs (or Downtown Disney) as well."

While visiting Universal Studios on Monday, Ms. Babcock received information that their flight home would be canceled and the earliest flight that could be booked was two days later, on a Wednesday.

"One of the parents texted me and said, 'Hey, I just saw our trip, your flight was canceled,' and I was like, 'Oh thank you!' and I got on and I saw that it was canceled myself," Ms. Babcock shares. "Then, I spent two and a half hours on hold with

the airline while my tour director, who was the person showing us around Florida, was on hold with the tour company. We were both talking to different people and getting it all set up; it took us about two and a half hours on the phone sitting in an empty café at Universal Studios."

Although this was exciting for some students, others were not too thrilled and even became nervous.

"It was like a genuine general sadness, like a sad-anger.... We just wanted to go home and we're thinking we were gonna go home and it turns out we weren't, but it turned out okay," mentions Richling. "Ms. Babcock and Ms. Kerry, our tour guide, just did an amazing job calling the airports and getting a new flight, which we are so grateful for, because we didn't have to worry about anything." After those unexpected extra two days, everyone was sad but relieved to finally go home.

"I was kind of sad because I didn't want to go back to school," Nichols says. "I also thought it was going to be very cold, but [I was] also excited to sleep in my own bed and I'm glad that I could go back to my own room."

Historical!

By: Madeline Scoggins

That loud booming voice, that inexhaustible energy, and that undying passion to acquire and disperse knowledge can only be associated with one instructor at Jefferson academy, that's right, student favorite Mr. Ketcham.

JA's Modern U.S History teacher Mr. Ketcham's favorite part about teaching is being able to build relationships with his students and watch their love for history develop.

"I love talking about the wars; I love being able to change students' minds and give them information to rethink how they feel about topics," Ketcham states. "The Civil War is a fun one because that's what my master's degree is in. The holocaust, as depressing as it is, is interesting to see how the kids react. Talking about those topics is always my favorite." Not only does he love teaching, but also enjoys getting involved with the community in order to strengthen his bond with students. This year he got the opportunity to coach the

senior powder-puff team.

"It's fun to get into the competition," says Ketcham. "A lot of the girls when we play know nothing about football and it's interesting to see them slowly figure it out. It's fun to stand and watch the competitive juices flow because this school is highly competitive. Then, at the end of the game, they are all

loving on each other even though 20 minutes ago they were trying to literally rip each other's heads off, and that's fun to watch how the kids here can turn on these competitive fights but then turn it off and go have dinner together."

Through Mr. Ketcham's time at JA, he has been able to bond with students and leave lasting impressions on them, not

only outside of the classroom, but in his classes too.

"My favorite part of his class was always knowing that when I walked into his room, I was going to have a good laugh and learn a lot of new fun facts about America," explains junior Avere German. "He would let us talk to each other and discuss the points and facts made within the lesson, which brought us a lot closer." He makes learning fun, as most students would describe it. They enjoy how he creates fun projects and activities in order to learn more about a subject and get involved with their classmates. "He did this activity where he took the class outside with chairs and ping pong balls to recreate trench warfare," junior Emmy Zerbib recalls. "It was a ton of fun and allowed the class to understand how each team had to come up with a plan to win."

Ketcham enjoys being able to guide students toward their own ideas and opinions about history and the subjects they are focusing on.

"It's interesting dealing with the way people in the world today are preserving history and how some topics should be taught and some shouldn't be taught, how there are people in the U.S. that feel we shouldn't teach about slavery or this and that," remarks Ketcham, "whereas I feel we teach about everything and let the kids make the decision. Let them make the choices they need for themselves."

What Choice to Choose

By: Benjamin Schumm

It's that time of year again: next year's new classes were just announced, and students are thinking about what they want on their schedules next year.

This year's list includes a whole lot of new classes, from Latin to Music Theory. These classes will help to expand students' options and open up new opportunities for them.

"That's where the social media marketing came up because I just think that we're so immersed in social media and there's this whole idea of YouTube and TikTok fame," said Ms. Luceri, one of our tech teachers, who is taking on two new classes next year, High School Yoga and Social Media Marketing.

"I'm not trying to push kids to become online stars, but we'll be doing some analysis of popular internet celebrities, but then also learning how to become content creators. Really, if I had the choice to name the class, it'd be Content Creators," mentioned Luceri. "We'll do some market analysis, along with some projects creating content with Canva and CapCut and building our own marketing campaign. We'll also be learning how to effectively use social media to gain traction and followers," she stated.

Ms. Luceri isn't the only one bringing some new and interesting classes to the school. One of the unique characteristics of JA is the fact that teachers can introduce a wide variety of courses that they think students may be interested in.

"I'm really interested in some of the new classes that are being offered. I'd love to try Social Media for Business, Creative Writing, Yoga, or Sports Medicine. All of those classes either relate to my interests or can help in a field that I want to go into," remarked sophomore Cath-

rine Berg. Interested in many of the classes, she said that she appreciates the uniqueness and value of the new classes being offered. "A lot of these classes are different from classes I've seen offered before, which is really ap-

pealing. I really like that JA is branching out and including some electives that may not have been thought of before." Berg stated that the new classes were refreshing, and even had some ideas for classes she thought would be interesting. "I think it would be really cool to have a broadcast reporting class where students learned

to make short videos or commentaries about sports games or school events. It would be an interesting alternative to AV production where students could focus on the more news-related side of things," commented Berg.

"I don't care for most of the new classes, but Disease Studies definitely caught my eye," junior Nova Brunson admitted, noting that most of the classes didn't seem too interesting, with Disease Studies being the exception.

"I don't really know much about how diseases work, or how they infect the human body. I just think it's a really interesting subject." Brunson proclaimed lots of interest in Disease Studies but was more interested in a few ideas that she had for new classes.

"I think a self-defense class could be interesting, but we lack the capability to do something like that. Realistically, I'd really like to see a class about practical skills, where teachers talk about what they wish they had known after high school."



Decided

By: Mackenzie Estep

A loud sigh emerges as the headaches and stress are expressed with a breath and the typing of fingernails that have been chewed raw, a picture that many seniors can relate to with their recent applications to colleges.

Some of this worry has been lifted after the decisions for early action applicants were released in December, bringing them one step closer to their post-secondary decisions. Senior Anna Brenneman

shared her content with her decision to apply early, saying, “I am glad that I applied during early action, but it is mostly because of the personal satisfaction that I finished my applications earlier and will likely get my decision back sooner as well.”

Senior Kate Rock added, “I like early decisions because it solidifies where you are going. I feel relief knowing exactly where I am going next year instead of still trying to decide.”

It also is nice because I don't have to focus on learning the ins and outs of a ton of different colleges' admissions processes."

There are many different options and deadlines when it comes to applying for colleges, but early action has many benefits and reasons as to why students might want to get their applications in sooner. “It may be beneficial for some students to choose early decision because it will boost

their chances of being accepted into whatever school they are interested in,” Brenneman states. “Early decision tells the schools that they are that student’s number one choice. This makes these students very desirable.”

Rock shared why she decided to apply early to her college by saying, “I chose to apply for early decision because I would be able to find out if I was admitted sooner, which in the long run would help me feel

like I'm less on a time crunch to get everything done." Despite the many advantages that come with choosing to apply early, there are also some negatives that come along with it.

“The cons of early decision, at least for me personally, is the financial burden that it may lead to,” said Brenneman. “If you commit to a school that ends up being much more expensive, it makes it hard to continue to afford tuition.”

Everyone's college admission experience is different and each individual is able to create their future plan, no matter what deadline they chose to apply to.

"I don't really think it makes a lot of difference to choose early decision over regular admission," Rock theorizes. "In the long run, it all just depends on your timeline. Everyone will get a chance to figure themselves out no matter the results."

Collegial

By: Lucia Mott

The familiar sound of high school students scurrying through the halls of Front Range Community College echoes as they rush to their college classes offered by JA.

Taking college classes in high school can be a challenge because of the workload and stress put on the student; however, most students use it as a way to get ahead.

Senior Dustin Reidy only started taking college classes this year, but he thinks the classes are worth the large workload.

“There are a couple of advantages to taking college classes,” Reidy shares. “First off, you save quite a bit of money if your credits transfer to whatever college you’re going to. You also get some experience with how college classes work, and having college credit on your high school transcript looks good and makes colleges much more interested in you.”

Taking college classes can ask a lot of a student, and more attention and time is needed than in typical high school classes.

“If the college class you’re taking only has lectures twice a week, then they take much more attention than a typical high school class,”

Reidy explains. “But, if it’s 4-5 times a week, then I would say it’s about equal.”

Though the classes do ask more of you in a shorter amount of time, Reidy thinks that it's always a good idea to push yourself to do something that seems out of your reach.

"I chose to take college courses because of the financial benefits and as a way to set myself apart from others when applying for colleges," Reidy says.

On the flipside, senior Leia Michel has a slightly different view on taking a college class.

“I have taken almost every core college class that JA offers through Front Range,” Michel shares. “Unfortunately for me, I am majoring in marine biology and I do not need History and English for the colleges I have gotten accepted into. That being said, I entirely believe taking college classes got me into the colleges I applied to.”



Far From Easy

By: Gianna Gagliano

FAFSA, or Free Application For Student Federal Aid: an acronym that has become rather dreaded amongst high school seniors after their recent “soft-launch” period. FAFSA is an online form completed by current and prospective college students in the United States. This form takes information from the student’s financial and living status to determine their eligibility for student financial aid such as federal grants, scholarships, and loans to help pay for their higher education.

“FAFSA is a tedious process,” says senior Grace Douglas, “but I know that it’s important, and I am really glad that I have the opportunity to get to college and get any financial aid that I can.”

In previous years, the FAFSA opened in October. Students were able to complete the form at any time after it opened. This made the task of filling the form out a rather convenient process,

as it could be completed whenever the student wanted. But it contained excessive amounts of questions, causing students and their families to spend long hours working through the tiresome form.

“My sister completed the FAFSA three years ago in October,” says Senior Connor Scarboro. “I remember her and my mom sitting on the couch filling out this form for hours. I also remember the confusion that a lot of the questions caused them.”

The FAFSA Simplification Act removed many questions, including questions about selective service and drug convictions. By doing this, it allowed filling out the form to be a much more efficient process. To monitor technical concerns and traffic, the Federal Student Aid decided to utilize a soft launch period. This means that the form was only available for short periods of time to monitor performance.

“The soft launch period frustrated me so much,” says Scarboro. “It felt like every time I went to fill out the form, the site was down. I could never perfectly time it to fill out the form when it was open. It is even more frustrating because FAFSA is a first come, first serve process.”

What Did They Say?

By: Ender Gressett

Subtitles, the ever useful, sometimes annoying, and somewhat controversial use of text in films, documentaries, and TV shows. While they can be useful in some cases and irritating in others, there is no shortage of opinions on if they have their place or not.

Junior Drew Fecko doesn't tend to use subtitles when he watches movies, as he retains the ability to hear the movie well enough not to need text.

"I don't use subtitles," Fecko recalls, "because I can hear it well enough to where I don't need them, and they're sort of annoying being at the bottom of the screen."

However, Fecko does use subtitles in documentaries from time to time, and he finds use for them in other circumstances as well.

"[I use subtitles in documentaries] occasionally, because it's different from a movie since it's more information-based than a story," Fecko states. "[I mainly use subtitles] if it's a video in another language or if I'm doing other stuff far away from the screen and can't hear it."

Another junior, Holden Gillings, believes that subtitles are almost completely useless in most circumstances, as he has the ability to hear what's going on.

"No, [I don't use subtitles when I watch mov-

ies]," Gillings remarks, "because I can listen, I have ears. [I don't use subtitles in documentaries] unless it's really hard to understand, then I would. I use subtitles if it's really loud, I can't understand the person, or if it's in a different language."

One movie that Gillings enjoyed the most, going as far to see it many times, was the first Iron Man movie, a movie that didn't have subtitles any of the five times he watched it.

"I remember [the first] Iron Man because I watched it about 5 times," Gillings recalls. "Honestly, at this point, I remember the whole movie, and it didn't have subtitles."

History teacher Mr. Ketcham also has opinions on the use of subtitles in both personal and professional life, and he finds them to be handy in

many settings.

"It depends on the movie and the situation," Ketcham says. "So if my kids are doing something else I will turn on the subtitles so I don't have to crank [the volume.] Here, at school, if I have the access, I will turn on the subtitles just so the students can catch [the information]. At home, it's much more dependent on the day, dependent on the moment, dependent on the movie."



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I Rest My Case

By: Madeline Scoggins

The sound of a gavel thudding against a bench rings out through the courtroom as JA's Mock Trial team faces off. Mock Trial offers students the chance to practice in a fake trial with a real courtroom and judge. It teaches people interested in entering the field of law new skills that can be used later in life.

"It gives high school students the opportunity to practice being a lawyer and get pre-law experience," says sophomore Katie Proctor.

Mock Trial allows students to explore a career they might be interested in for their future.

"It's dynamic, exciting, challenging, and helps with a ton of skills. The students are building an amazing base for moving forward into whatever profession they choose. And the base here is just strong, awesome work that's happening," says Judge Tiffany Sorice.

The students get to dive into critical thinking skills and figure out the angles they plan on using and the defenses and objections they will need to make. It forces them to think on the spot and memorize the parts of their role for their trial to go smoothly.

"It is a great opportunity to learn public speaking and presentation skills. A case is released that includes witness statements. Each member then plays a part, a witness, lawyer, etc. as the case is presented," states Ms. Ferbrache.

Presentation and speaking skills are necessary assets for their future; Mock Trial gives the chance for students to grow

and learn those skills. It has helped students find their voice and teaches them more about the law and self-advocacy.

"It's taught me a lot about public speaking. Last year they had us stand up and talk in front of the group. I'm not a people person and I get very nervous doing that as do other people even if they can talk in a group setting. It can just be hard, talking in front of people can be uncomfortable and it's just helped me a lot with that," states freshman Kendall Hand.

They each have a role that they have to learn in order for the trial to go smoothly. Public speaking is a struggle for lots of students, this allows them to have a specific part to help them become more confident.

"This year's trial is about covid and the defendant Quinn Dixon threw a New Year's Eve party and one of the people who came got sick and had very bad effects having to be hospitalized and is suing the defendant," states Hand.

Lovely Locks

By: Abigail Stephens

From the mullet making a comeback to that one weekend when a bunch of students buzzed and bleached their hair, self-expression in the form of hairstyle has been much more noticeable this year. It goes beyond just how you part your hair and whether you straighten it or not. Old styles, new styles, and colors can be seen while walking the halls. Some popular hairstyles at Jefferson Academy are bubble braids, dyed hair, and a newer look – ‘Tik Tok Boy’ hair.

Bubble braids are a current trend among girls in team sports. This hairstyle is worn often because there are many “variations” you can do



with bubble braids. Its popularity stems from its simplicity. All it requires is long hair and a few rubber bands. “It’s not even a braid,” states Junior Aubrey Nelson. “[You] just put rubber bands around [sections of hair] and poof them out.”

Many people express themselves with the color of their hair. This includes the popular hairstyle described as dyed and asymmetrical. “I like dying my hair red because it fades nicer than other colors,” says senior Ace Kellerman, currently rocking the color pink. They point out, “Even as it fades it turns into a pink which still looks intentional.” Like many others, Ana expresses herself with their hair. They take note of all the different hairstyles in JA. “I think that we just kind of careless now,” they

observe. “Everyone feels freer to do their own thing rather than everyone feeling like they have to have the same haircut.”

Similar to the “TikTok boy hair,” but a bit more prevalent in the early to mid 2010s, is a style simply known as “the floof.” The floof is a slightly shorter version of TikTok boy hair. It’s called the floof because it’s characterized by brushed-forward bangs that are slightly curled upwards, giving them a floofy appearance.

“My hairstyle is probably closest to the floof,” describes senior Mark Leoni. “It works well with my face shape and is relatively easy to maintain.” While he does call it “relatively easy to maintain,” he does elaborate that he has a “loose wash and oiling schedule.” It makes you wonder how much time the kids you see spend on their hair styling.

Another example of media influence, and the hairstyle we’ve all noticed and wanted to comment on, is “TikTok boy hair.” That fluffy, messy, brushed-forward hairstyle that at least half the male students have was first made popular on the social media app TikTok.

“I used to have to style it,” recalls Sophomore Luca Arroyo, “but now it’s just like this.” He is one of the many students who have the TikTok inspired hair. He explains he used to spend roughly thirty minutes on his hair in the mornings, but now he just wakes up and his hair is like that.

“[I spend] like fifteen-ish minutes,” explains sophomore Jackson Kennell as his peers nag at him to be honest in the background. “I put my liquid wax spray in my hair while my hair is still damp, then I wait until it’s fully dry and put a little sea salt spray in it.” His observations on current hairstyles are that “[people] spend a little bit more time on their hair but it has also become more casual.”

The wide variation of hairstyles at JA conveys the amount of self-expression students get. Some are cool, and some will make us cringe when we revisit a yearbook later in life, but all help students express their individuality.



Show Rider

By: Madeline Scoggins

The National Western Stock Show has been a Colorado tradition for years, but for two girls at Jefferson Academy, it is more than a tradition.

“I have been preparing for it for around 1 year but I only had about 2 weeks to train with Pongo, the horse I was going to use in the Stock Show,” says sophomore Sofia Garioto. “I had to work on him gaining my trust because he’s never been in an environment like the Stock Show.”

Garioto performs in an event called Equi Cross put on by Cinch at the Stock Show. It’s a series of challenges where a rider and her horse performs in front of their competitor for a chance to win scholarship money. She and Pongo worked hard to be in the Stock Show.

“I can’t imagine not doing this with Pongo,” states Garioto. “He was incredibly amazing, and it is an event I will never forget.”

Getting the chance to perform at the National Western Stock Show is an incredible opportunity. These girls have been working hard to make this chance worth it.

“I do Liberty jumping with my drill team, so we perform complex maneuvers involving jumps without saddles and bridles on, controlling our horses with a wire around their necks,” states Quinn Owen.

Owen rides with a group called Westernaires and has been working hard to perform with her team and their horses. Her team is devoted to showing the trust between a rider and their horse. “I have ridden 5 years consistently with Westernaires, but just got to the level where I could do big performances this year,” Owen reveals. “I got to perform in Akron, Estes Park, and now the Stock Show.”

It takes a lot of trust to be working with these horses. Garioto and Owen didn’t waste their opportunities to ride in front of a crowd. They practiced for weeks before being ready to ride in the Stock Show and did really well in their respective performances. “It taught me that horses need to trust you because they hold your life in their hands so without trust on both sides you aren’t getting anywhere,” Owen says.

Winter Workout

By: Hannah Strumpher

Snow, ice, water, and the thudding of gym mats come together to create a unique atmosphere that has each athlete's heart racing at the joy their winter sport has to offer.

Many of JA's community members have a passion for winter sports, which include hockey, figure skating, skiing, snowboarding, swimming, and wrestling, with skiing typically being the most popular option. Junior Ian Sloan is an avid skier and takes every opportunity offered to get into the snow.

"I ski quite a lot," Sloan says. "I frequently make my way up to the mountains with my



own pair of skis and a couple of family friends. I absolutely love it, so much so that I even work at a ski shop!"

Some students take their sport to a highly competitive level, while others just enjoy it as a hobby. For hockey player Kaleb King, the former is the case.

"I've played hockey my entire life," King recalls. "I started at the club level and was competitive all throughout it, and in high school I joined Colorado Academy's varsity team. I love the competitive rivalries and the physicality of the sport. Hockey is life."

Competitive figure skater Tiffany Bunce takes a similar approach to her athletic career.

"Skating has its highs and lows," Bunce shares, "but nothing can compare to the feeling you get when you land a new jump or run a good

program. I've learned to fall and get back up, trying over and over again. It's made me a better, stronger person. Skating has shaped who I am."

Like Bunce, Sloan has also learned several life lessons over the years. He can link his experience learning how to ski to his uncanny ability to adapt amidst chaos.

"When I was about ten or eleven, my parents and family friends had me spend one or two days learning how to ski on the small slopes," Sloan remembers. "However, they really wanted to push me, so they threw me onto some of

the more intermediate slopes. I really had to grow and learn as I went from there."

For athletes like wrestler Emerson Claeys, accomplishments come in a more physical form. Claeys regularly competes in wrestling meets for Pomona High School. He was named first-team all-conference in his league and is currently ranked second in the state.

"I've wrestled for almost nine years now," Claeys remarks.

"I started out at the club lev-

el and won my first national tournament in eighth grade. Last year I joined Pomona's wrestling team and we won JV state. This year I've competed in a lot of national tournaments and placed second at Top of the Rockies after wrestling the #4-ranked wrestler in the nation. Recently, I won 1st place at Leagues for Colorado 5A."

Although these various winter sports provide an easy way for athletes to stay physically in shape, their interests also provide an emotional outlet that can greatly improve mental health.

"Day-to-day life can be really stressful, but when you're up on a mountain you're basically free to go anywhere you want," Sloan comments. "It really enhances mental health; you're able to hide in the trees and race through the runs. It's a freeing experience."



Spring Loaded

By: Cass Carpenter

Spring is in the air, flowers are blooming, warmer weather is here! Well, not really, but that doesn't stop the sporty jags from getting their seasons started up! The JA girl's soccer season, boy's baseball, and track and field are in preseason and everyone is excited!

Alison Smith is very much anticipating the start of her junior season of track: "I am looking forward to hopefully making it to state, and cheering people on. I am also looking forward to getting to run one last season with some seniors that I have been running hurdles with since I was a freshman."

Along with her seeing a solo improvement with her running over the past few years, she sees a huge improvement within the team as well.

"I think that there is a lot of new talent and old talent that I am excited to see grow this season," said Smith. "I also think that people have their eyes on state and that will make this season a fun and competitive season with lots of hard work and dedication."

Seeing that there are hard workers and dedicated runners on the track and field team, junior Cody Freel shares his opinion on how the baseball team is looking.

Freel is entering his third season as a jag, and he is keeping his head held up high as they go into their weight training phase before the start of field practices.

"Starting soon, we will start having weekly practices and continuing on throughout the winter, such as weights," stated Freel.

Freel is super excited to get started and see improvements in himself, but also this year he really wants to see more of a

team progression.

"Yeah, we hope to see more energy on the field and in the dugout, effort even if we are down, teamwork no matter what, and confidence at the plate, on defense, just all around at this point," commented Freel.

Although some of our athletes are seeing very early progression, it's a little different for the lady jags soccer team.

Junior Mikayla Pitts shares, "It is still a little early in the season to tell if there is any improvement or change, especially considering that there are a lot of new freshmen coming in and the season is just beginning....I think this season we will progress as a team eventually. Now most of the team is used to the new coach and how he operates so we will be able to progress a lot faster than we did last season."

The bond on the soccer team will make a difference and bring the team together to progress more. Pitts said, "I'm looking forward to being able to be around everyone again as well as being able to play with a team that I love and enjoy playing with."

Bouncing Into Action

By: Hayley Smith

Winter sports have returned, and Boy's and Girl's Basketball Teams are quick to bounce into action.

Boy's Varsity has had a very successful season so far, winning many of their games. Josh Neely stated that he thinks "the season has been going great."

The team has had a lot of fun competing against the other teams in their league. "We've struggled with some teams, but there have been highlights," junior Jackson Tomalak says. "We've been able to grow a lot, which has been good."

Working together as a team and having great chemistry is a large part of a successful season. Tomalak explained, "We always know how to build each other up and always pick each other up."

Neely shares a similar point of view, stating that, "The team chemistry is great. We have a lot of fun and enjoy each other's company." Looking ahead, Neely thinks the Boy's Varsity Basketball Team can make it into the playoffs. The team has a very tough schedule, but he thinks the team can get into the Elite 8.

"I think next year is going to be a key year," Tomalak shares. "We'll have a lot of people returning, and we can continue to grow."

Rivalries have always been a large aspect of sports competitions. Neely shared his point of view, stating that their "biggest rival is Forge. The team has a lot of memories of beating them, but they also beat us."

To stay motivated for the basketball season, Neely explains that the team goes into games "with a mentality that we aren't going to let the other team win." Additionally, he added that he stays motivated "to prove that we are the best on the court every time we step on it. It's to win my matchup every game," and to prove that he is a good player.

The Girl's Varsity Team has shared similar success, starting the season strong with a winning record.

"I think it's been pretty good," junior Sofia Pathak comments. "I think this year in particular we have had a lot more team continuity. This is one of the smaller teams we've had. We don't have many swings, we only have one freshman swing, so everyone is a lot more together than in previous years when almost half the team was swinging."

When asked about the team's chemistry, Pathak stated that the junior class is pretty dominant in sports this year.

"We are able to work together in other sports, mainly soccer, so we have more chemistry since we play multiple sports together," Pathak says. "Looking ahead, I think we will definitely make the state tournament. Once we get to state, we just have to take it one game at a time."

Concerning the team's motivation, Marlo Campbell explained her beliefs, stating, "I think just playing for our teammates [motivates us]. We all want to help each other out because we are all super close this season." Pathak agreed, saying that they all "show up for each other." Additionally, Elsa Nygren stated that they "all want to get better as a team and not so much individually."

