

TURKEY TALK

FEB. 12, 2009
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3



A Fragrant Atmosphere, For A Change

By Ashley Venne
Staff Writer

Students at Aitkin High school may have noticed flower arrangements around the school. Chances are not as many gentlemen have noticed since most of them are in the female restrooms, but some are in the office. Where on earth did these come from, and why do we have flower arrangements in our restrooms?

Our Aitkin High School principal had flower arrangements brought in to lighten the atmosphere around school. There was a meeting for teachers and staff on Jan. 19 while the students had no school. At this meeting, Mr. Wagner invited a speaker to come in and talk about school atmosphere, and how to make it feel more fun and less like prison. It has been proven in other schools that flowers in a bathroom reduce vandalism and lighten the atmosphere.

He says he wishes the students had more pride in the building, he wants the students to build a community where kids are

sticking up for kids and staff. Since it breaks his heart to see students picking on students because of how they look or act. "We want to make school a fun place to be," he said. An AHS student, Emma Reeves said, "The flowers add a surprising change to the bathrooms; I think it makes students respect the space more when it looks nicer."

The paintings we have in the school now are just a start of what he hopes will be great. Any art work we can put up in the school would be good. Also any student that wanted to do some kind of art work could get a draft to him and then if he O.K.'ed it, he would allow it to be done.

He wants students to understand his rules are for safety of the student body; his decisions are not just him trying to be mean but to protect students, so students can take more pride in the school. He would like everyone to be able to celebrate differences and abilities. The best thing we all could do is if everyone said good morning or hello to someone everyday, according to Wagner.



Mr. Wagner put flowers in the girls bathrooms.



The History of Valentine's



By Allie Carlson
Staff Writer

Have you ever wondered why we celebrate Valentine's Day? Where did the idea come from for celebrating the ones you love? Some people say that it is just a holiday in which greeting card companies, candy companies, and flower shops invented so that they can get more money. The US Greeting Card Association estimates that one billion Valentine's Day cards are sent out, making it the second largest holiday in which cards are sent. So why do we spend our money on this day and why do we celebrate this holiday?

The idea of celebrating Valentine's Day is a giant mystery. Some people believe that we celebrate Valentine's Day to celebrate three Christian Martyrs named Saint Valentine. There are many Saint Valentine's in the Christian World, but the ones we supposedly

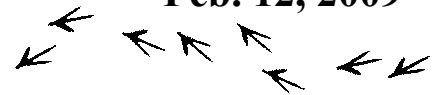
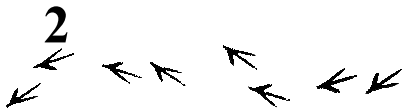
celebrate are Valentine of Rome, Valentine of Terni, and a Valentine that was mentioned in the Catholic Encyclopedia. These Saints were celebrated on Feb. 14, which was feast day of Saints. None of these deal with anything that deals with love, card sending, candy giving, or flowers. So why do we send these wonderful things to our loved ones?

Another theory of where Valentine's Day came from was Belarus. People from Belarus believe that Saint Valentine was rejected by his mistress and cut his heart out and sent it to her to prove his undying love. This is believed of where sending heart shaped letters to loved ones came from.

So when did Valentine's Day become a national holiday? Where did we get the idea of getting our loved ones gifts? Honestly, people don't know exactly when we started to celebrate Valentine's Day. People

believe than it goes back as far as 1840, because an author stated that, "Saint Valentine's Day... is becoming, nay it has become, a national holiday." The idea of giving people Valentine Cards started in 1847 in North America when Esther Howland received a Valentine's Card from someone in England. She was inspired by it, and she began to sell laced hearts and other cards for Valentine's Day. Throughout the years, cards have developed into candies, flowers, V-cards (emailed Valentine's Cards), and jewelry.

So maybe we are spending money. Maybe this whole idea of celebrating a holiday that we don't even know came from is pointless. But anyone that has received a card or gift will agree that it is whether it is pointless or not, it's nice to know you're being thought of.



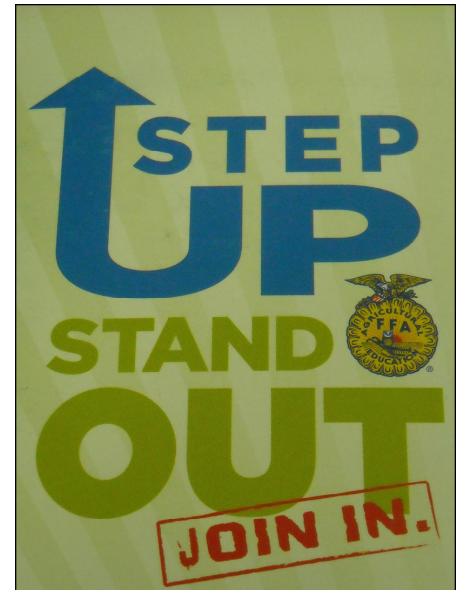
National FFA Week ready to kick off

**By Ashley McMurray and
Theresa Tveit**
Staff Writers

The week of Feb. 21-28, will be national FFA week. Our local chapter will be celebrating by having some fun-filled activities. The fun-filled activities will include: support stickers that will be sold to students and FFA supporter signs will be placed around town. There will be a guess how many are in a jar contest, be a star in the FFA day, there will also be a

scavenger hunt for teachers and students, and the FFA jacket and history will also be on display for the week.

We ask, "Why do they celebrate?" Laura Peggs said, "We celebrate the FFA week to raise awareness and to get more kids involved in FFA." If anyone wants to get involved, you can volunteer at your local chapter or go to FFA.org. So let's not let Agriculture cease to exist!



FFA Week is coming up at the end of February.



Driving Dilemma for women in Saudi Arabia

By Lauren Landrus
Staff Writer

Getting your drivers license is one of the many highlights of high school, of growing up. It's something we all look forward to as a child. Getting your license gives you a sense of freedom and independence. We no longer have to depend on our parents to bring us to school, to practice, or even just to hang out with our friends. But after a short while the excitement eventually goes away and it becomes part of our every day life.

If you were a girl in Saudi Arabia, you would probably not take it for granted. Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world that bans women from driving. Not only are female citizens not allowed to drive, but female visitors from other countries are also not allowed to.

Recently Saudi princess Amira al-Taweel has been stirring up some con-

*Not only are female
citizens not allowed to
drive, but female visitors
from other countries are
also not allowed to.*

trovery. She has told local newspapers that she is ready to drive. Amira drives when she is visiting other countries. She has an international driver's license and can drive everywhere but in her home country. Her husband, who happens to be the 13th richest man in the world, according to "Forbes" magazine, seems to back up the idea of her driving. He stated in an interview that he would be "the first to let his wife and daughter drive if the ban was lifted."

Other princesses have spoken out against the ban, but no changes have ever been made. In 2007, a group of women brought a petition to King Abdullah for women to drive cars. The petition was shot down. Saudi officials do not admit that the law is related to anything religious, but is a social issue. The argument the conservative officials use is that it would allow women to freely interact with men. Officials feel that if the ban is lifted and women are allowed to drive, the modest laws of the Kingdom would begin to erode.

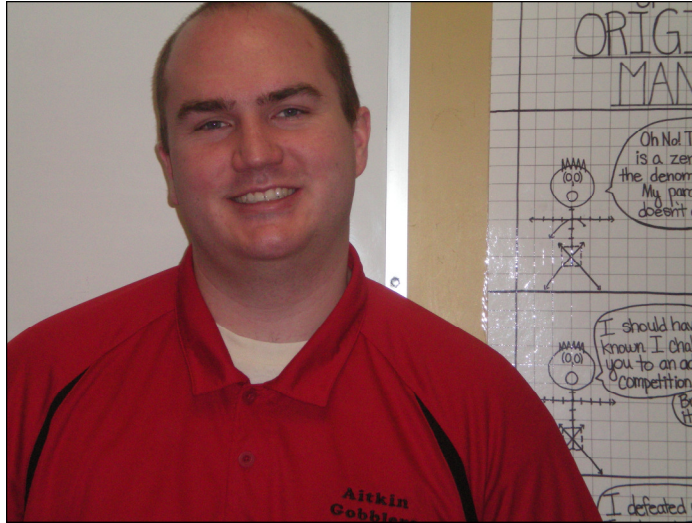
The princess expressed to reporters that it is sometimes uncomfortable even inconvenient at times to have a male chauffeur. I can imagine! Women in Saudi Arabia continue to lobby against the ban; hopefully they will eventually gain their right to drive.

New Face in math department

By Laura Peggs
Staff writer

Mr. Nordick is Aitkin High School's new seventh grade math teacher. He became a math teacher because when he was in grade school, he had a math teacher that was a big influence on him. Mr. Nordick said, "He taught me to truly value and enjoy the subject," and he wanted to do the same thing for other kids like his teacher did for him. From that moment, he knew that he wanted to become a teacher.

When he started college, he attended the University of North Dakota with the intention to become a mechanical engineer, but then becoming a teacher came back to him from his past experiences with his math teacher, and his second semester he switched his major to teaching. Mr. Nordick does other things besides teaching as well. He enjoys spending time with his two sisters and older brother that are currently living where he grew up, in Pelican Rapids, Minnesota. He is engaged and is planning a summer wedding. He also enjoys



Mr. Nordick comes to AHS fresh out of college at the University of North Dakota.

spending his time traveling to the Minnesota State Parks. Mr. Nordick has currently been to 31 out of the 72 parks and plans on visiting the rest of them. He enjoys traveling. He has been to the Aitkin area before with his family and friends to some cabins around the area and really enjoyed it. When he received a job offer to teach math at Aitkin High School, he said yes.

Mr. Wagner would be

his first boss in a teaching profession. Teaching seventh graders is Mr. Nordick's first teaching job, and he's enjoying it a lot. He didn't choose to teach seventh grade, they chose him. He went to college to become a junior or senior high school math teacher, and Aitkin High School needed a seventh grade teacher. He was a little unsure about the position but knew the area, so he jumped in. Mr. Nordick said that he wouldn't

change age groups now because he really enjoys the seventh graders, and the students really enjoy him. One of his students, Nathan Johnson, said that he likes him because he sometimes gives short assignments. Another student, Cierra LaPante, also a seventh grader in Mr. Nordick's math class said, "Mr. Nordick is nice."

He's really enjoying Aitkin High School. The thing Mr. Nordick finds the most interesting about Aitkin High School, besides teaching the seventh graders, is the staff. He learns a lot from them and enjoys Mrs. Smith's funny lunch stories. The staff enjoys Mr. Nordick as well. One of his coworkers Mrs. Christy said, "Mr. Nordick has been a great addition to the staff, especially the seventh grade team."

One of the events in Aitkin High School that Mr. Nordick is looking forward to is this year's musical "Cinderella." All around he said that the Aitkin community is a great place to live and Aitkin High School is a great place to teach.

Crush Cans are Back

By Ann Rhodes
Staff Writer

Student Council started selling crush cans this week for Valentine's Day. The cans were sold for one dollar during the mornings and lunches throughout the week. Crush cans come with a poem and are given to the recipients on Friday during planning room. There were 200 cans ordered by the student council, which was the average number of sodas sold in years past. Students will have the choice to pick be-

tween grape and orange flavored sodas. It has been a tradition for several years to sell cans during the week before Valentine's Day. Student Council member, Ashley Venne, said that she doesn't know how the tradition came to be in Aitkin. Researching the topic led to no prevail; no record of when the crush cans started was found. The history doesn't make a difference to how sweet the tradition is. Enjoy your crush cans everyone.



The student council is selling crush cans all week.

OPINION

School at the Cracks?

Feb. 12, 2009

By: Ashley Riggs
Staff Writer

Is Aitkin High School due for an update? I went around the school looking for things that needed to be fixed or updated. One time in Yearbook water was dripping from the ceiling. There was also a problem on third floor with the ceiling leaking. I went and talked to a few teachers about the issue to see how they feel and if changes were necessary.

"I think we have done updates on our equipment, but I think there is more to do inside the school. There are repairs need to be made as far as the structure of the building goes," as quoted from Marie Gordon. I decided to figure out who is in charge of these repairs and it turns out it's the state. The Funding goes to fixing the school and other things. Without funding our school falls apart, literally.

I went and talked to the chemistry teacher, Mrs. Smith to see what she thought on the issue, "I would like more hall decorations dedicated to students and sports. Why not cover the whole wall?" We also talked about if she needed updates on equipment and other things and this is what she had to say on the issue, "The school is really good updating equipment, and I do have an unfair advantage, as I'm a chemistry teacher."

I decided to interview Darla Croatt, our school librarian, to see if that was also true about our library. I learned that there are people in

control of different departments when a teacher is in need of books; the teachers or person in charge of that department decide who should get the money or who needs it more. I asked Darla what kind of updates she would like to see in our school. "Updates on computers with Microsoft, they are redoing the counter in the library. I would like to see TVs in the common area like announcements playing and a mounted projector in the auditorium." I asked her if she thought the school was too small for the growing number of people in the school and she told me that there had been an opportunity for our school to be built where the Riverwood Hospital now stands, but they decided against it. Our football field, and other fields would have been right there and our school could expand if need be, but they didn't take that into consideration when building our school where it is now.

I found this all interesting and wondered how the school would modify itself as the population grows. School might not need to expand itself for another ten years, but maybe its time for updates inside the school; it's just a matter of funding. But the cracks in the side walk may just get filled. Our school and many others may just get filled. President Obama is talking about increasing funding for all schools; there may just be improvements in our future and less cracks in the side walk.

Chrissie Chaos: Advice For The Inquiring Hearts

Dear Chrissie Chaos,
My girlfriend and I have been dating for two months. Do you have any suggestions for Valentines Day gifts? I really like her a lot!
Just Wondering, a student in Aitkin
Dear Chrissie Chaos,
Why don't guys like to get flowers for a special occasion, such as Valentine's Day?

Mystified and In Love

Dear Mystified,
To many guys, flowers represent all that is feminine. To get almost any guy to openly admit that he likes flowers, without any squeamishness, would be quite a challenge. Most guys would not like to receive a bouquet of flowers in front of other guys. To them it is taking a blow at their status. But, most guys might appreciate the sensitivity of a single white rose, which represents unity. If you know it might be a bother to him send him a cup of coffee with it, or a new video game he wants, or something that will "man it up."

Sincerely,
Chrissie Chaos

Dear Chrissie Chaos,
My girlfriend and I have been dating for two months. Do you have any suggestions for Valentines Day gifts? I really like her a lot!
Just Wondering, a student in Aitkin

Dear Just Wondering,
Getting a card that isn't too serious is always a good idea, a stuffed animal that has a cute saying, or even a small box of chocolates. Another idea that is a little more creative is creating a movie basket. This basket can contain two movie tickets, some classic movie snacks, and other things associated with movies.

Sincerely,
Chrissie Chaos



Aitkin Alternative School: Help out or Handout?

The Alternative school for me has been very helpful, but is Alt school just the easy way out? Personally right now I don't know the answer myself. That's what I wanted to find out so I asked a couple of people what they thought. I asked Mr. Wagner if he thought it was too easy. He said that it depends on the students and what they want to accomplish.

Samantha Meyer answered a few of my questions as well. I asked her if she thought the Alt school was too easy, and she stated "It's not easy all the time. You don't have someone there to help you with everything". I also asked her what she thought would improve the school. Sam said that the Alt school should have more classes that explain things to you.

All in all I think that Aitkin Alternative school is very helpful for students that have somehow got behind in their credits. It's a place where you teach yourself self-discipline and get one-on-one with the teachers. Over all Aitkin Alt School is a good way to get back those credits you need to graduate.

Crowded Parking Lot Causes Problems.

By Shannon Westerlund
Staff Writer

Ever get frustrated because of how crammed and congested the student and teacher parking lots get?

Year after year there are too many cars trying to fit in the student parking lot. Sometimes people have to park their car in front of or on the side of the garage. Often there are cars parked in front of others blocking them in. It is not uncommon for students to be late for school because they were searching for a parking space. Another problem is the amount of garbage that accumulates throughout the year along the fence and in the corners. This problem could be easily fixed if there was a garbage pail in the parking lot.

The Northwest teacher's parking lot is another complication.

After school this is the only place that parents can pick up their kids because the buses are parked along the street at the North entry. With all of the traffic going in and out and kids walking around it is an accident waiting to happen. When the buses are parked along the street there is only one entry/exit to use in the Northwest parking lot. Traffic is always backed up, unorganized, and you have to wait a long time to get in and out. When exiting, it is also very hard to see the traffic that is coming because of all the buses and cars parked.

The trash problem could be resolved if there are garbage pails put in the parking lot and the size of the student parking lot could be fixed if the garage was not there. If the garage was moved it would allow at least a

few more spaces to park and would give a lot more room. It's time something is done about this so there is a little more organization.



Cars jam packed in a parking lot.

Pros and Cons of College Classes.

By Arika Fairchild
Staff Writer

As most of you know, once you get to fill out your course schedule for your 11th and 12th grade year, the high school lets you have the options of going PSEO or take college classes in the school. Either way, you're getting to take college classes for free. But taking the college classes isn't as easy as it could be.

If you ask any college student they will tell you that they only have one or two classes a day, sometimes three but then other days they won't even have class. Here, if



Homework is stacking up.

you decide to take college classes, you have your college classes plus your regular classes and possibly an after school activity or a job. You don't have that much time to sit down and actually do all of your homework.

Some teachers like the fact you can have the chance to take the classes in high school but others think it is hard to keep up with your grades if you have all those classes to do homework in. Yes, you don't always get homework in all your classes but some days you do and it's not very challenging to keep up. I personally think the college classes are nice. Because now I don't have to take them in college where I'd have to pay for them, but being in a sport makes it hard to keep up.

Will The Actions Of A Few Ruin I.S. For The Rest Of Us?

Taylor Wilke
Staff Writer

Independent Study (I.S.) has been taken away in the past, so I went to see how students were using this time. While asking, I talked to many various students and Mr. Wagner. All the students for the most part thought that they were using I.S. properly, but most said that they had seen and know kids that don't know how to use the time appropriately. Shaun Hanson told me that he had finished many projects during I.S. Levi P. said that he uses I.S. but

doesn't usually have any work to do because he does it during class. When I talked to Mr. Wagner, he said, "When I walk the halls and go classroom to classroom, I see a few kids in each class not using the time right." He also said that, "85-90% of the students use the time the way it was intended." In the end he told me that, "The future of I.S. is in the students hands." For me I.S. is important because if we didn't have it you wouldn't be reading this story.

PSEO – Is it the option for you?



This is the south entrance of the Aitkin High School.

Nicole Beneke
Staff Writer

At the end of every student's senior year, there are requirements that must be met before being eligible to graduate. The most important requirement is ending your senior year with the required amount of credits. Between 9th and 12th grade the class of 2009 needs 33 block quarter credits, and 33 trimester credits. 2010 needs 16 quarter credits, and 47 trimester credits. 2011 and younger needs a total of 64 trimester credits.

If you are entering 11th or 12th grade with your credit requirements already met, post secondary could be for you. Post Secondary Enrollment options allow 11th and 12th grade students to attend post secondary schools either full time or part time and receive high school credits. Juniors must have a 3.0 GPA and seniors must have a 2.5 GPA. A 78 on the reading portion of the Accuplacer exam is also required. There are a couple advantages to going Post Secondary as well as some

disadvantages. It is possible to finish one or two years of college before your high school class graduates. There is no cost for standard tuition, fees, or books, and any equipment needed is paid for under the PSEO. This option could help many families save a great deal of money. However if you are strongly committed to a sport, club, or other high school fun activities, PSEO may not be the choice for you.

A Lunch Solution That Seems Probable and Fair

By Lacey Pospeck
Staff Writer

The more time I spend at lunch, the more frustrated I get. With the new wave of orange passes and the constant line budging, some of us are just fed up. There are some options our school should consider investing in. A few of these ideas are reinstating open lunch or expanding our salad bar.

Open lunch is allowing a certain group of students to leave school for an alternative lunch. The issues with open lunch are vast, but there are some compromises that could be made. One of the concerns discussed with Mr. Wagner was the liability on the school such as accidents and he said, "I couldn't have it on my conscience if a student was injured or killed." Even if there was some type of liability release form, the school would still be held responsible because the student is still functioning outside the building during school hours.

An idea I threw at him was having a student based fund to have a bus take us to Subway and back. The liability of X amount of student drivers would be zero because we'd have a bus driver, someone who is experienced in driving students in all types of conditions. The cost is minimal; \$11.50 an hour for the bus drivers, plus paying for each mile. The drive to Subway is approximately a four mile

round trip, so the cost would be negligible. Subway would be an appropriate destination because it is mostly healthy and create less travel time. A minimum amount of students would have to be signed up and pay a small fee each day or if enough were interested we could create a "season pass" for a larger fee.

Mr. Wagner and I discussed the what-if's of the subject and although he appeared to be strongly against the entire idea because of the danger to students, he offered his opinion of what it would take to convince him to reinstate it. He wishes we could guarantee nothing ghastly would ever happen. My thoughts are that lunch should be open for seniors who meet certain guidelines. Some of these guidelines would be a minimal GPA, cannot be failing any classes, have proven they can meet graduation requirements, no referrals, or tardiness.

The steps it would take to re-establish open lunch would be to write a proposal and address it at a school board meeting, meet with the Site Based Committee, and with the Meet and Confirm Committee.

The chance of actually enforcing this is slim to none. So, what else can we do? Another option would be to expand our school's salad bar. Vic and her staff make wonderful lunches, but let's face it we can't all like everything everyday. Currently we have the op-

tion of a salad, peanut butter and jelly, taco salad, or a sub. These main choices are accompanied by the fruit, salads, and toppings offered. Compared to most schools we have superior lunches. We have five choices everyday, six including bringing lunch from home. I've heard a lot of comments from students and staff that if we had a daily soup offered in our salad bar, that they'd eat in the cafeteria more. Nicole Beneke said, "There are some days you see girls eating just oranges and sandwiches from home because they're sick of eating the same thing."

So, is investing in a larger area and larger salad bar something our school is willing to do? West Babylon Senior High in New York, recently voted the healthiest school in America, has an assistant principal who walks around the cafeteria with a basket of fruit. This school does not offer anything to drink besides milk, water, and juice. The pop machines have been removed from their school. The student obesity rate has dropped two percent in one year. It makes me wonder if we had a School Wellness Council, like West Babylon, if it would bring students together to expand on these ideas and create a healthier school. If students had somewhere to express these ideas and had an adult working with them they'd feel like we had more freedom and say in what we put into our bodies.

Feb. 12, 2009

SPORTS

7

Starting To Gel After A Rocky Start

By Jace Goodmanson
Staff Writer

With a 10-3 record the Aitkin Boys basketball team has had a rough start. The team plays hard but seems to never finish a game says fans. "We are dedicated and have heart but never seem to jell as a team until now," says Andrew Welshons. Tom LaLond said "The team is starting to play as one and we will finish the season strong." Friday the team goes up against Ogilvie, away game. Next week the boys

have a busy week, Monday Onamia at home, Tuesday they take on Isle at home, and to wrap up the busy week Thursday the boys play Moose Lake at home. With the busy week ahead I asked player Albert Peterson for his thoughts" The team will bring the heat in the busy week!" Come out and cheer the boys on!



Lightning Makes Opponents Dig One

By Ashley Papenfuss
Staff Writer

This week in hockey the Lightning was very successful, finishing the week 2-0, after having a rough week the previous week. The Lightning started the week playing Walker on Tuesday Varsity winning 6-0 and JV 8-0 Aitkin players helping the team to victory on varsity were Sammy J with one Goal, on JV Jace Goodmanson with one goal and one assist and Alec Goodman-son with one goal. Thursday the team traveled to Bagley and put two more wins on the board Varsity won 4-3 and JV 11-0 Aitkin players helping out with that win were Sammy J one assist, Collin Burke one assist, on JV Evan Rhodes one goal,

Jace Goodmanson with two goals and Alec Goodmanson with one goal and two assists. The Varsity is 14-3-3 and JV is 17-0. The boy's next home game is against Wadena Deer Creek on Thursday and Ricorri on Saturday at Breezy, Monday against North Branch at the Hallet and Tuesday at Breezy against Prairie Centre.

Ray Smith goes for a lay up!



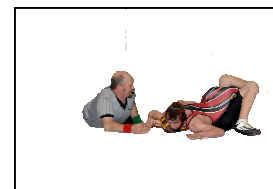
Wrestlers Fall To Warriors

By Ashley Papenfuss
Staff Writer

Last Tuesday the wrestlers fought a hard battle and fell just short against the Brainerd warriors. At 103 Travis Bare gave up a tech fall which put the wrestlers down 0, 5 Keith Wasserzieher came out with fire and pinned Dan Babineau in 32 seconds putting the Gobblers up by 1, Jordan Chaunard took on number three ranked kid, Brandon Mutz. Mutz pinned Chaunard and the Warriors went up 6-11. At 125 Brian Wold lost in a major decision,

putting Brainerd up 6 to 15, Craig Leathers pinned his kid in 1 minute 30 seconds; this fired the Gobblers up and Dalton Stevens and Isaac Novak won the next two matches putting the team up 19-15. T.J Landrus lost in a 5-3 decision this left the Gobblers only up by one. 152 pound, Kevin Handt got pinned putting the score at 19-24 Brainerd's way. Taylor-Thomas Bitker won in a major at 160, at 171 Travis Tuenge lost and at 189 Andrew Bast lost putting the gobblers' down 23-34. At 215 Doug Kommer got a forfeit putting Aitkin down by six going into

the heavy weight match. Taylor Wilke went out on the mat and wrestled hard but lost by one, after the match Wilke said "The whole match was close, there were many lead changes and it could have gone either way." The fans cheered loud; the team wrestled hard, but it just wasn't enough against the Triple A Warriors team.



Joe gets 6 for the Gobblers!

Swimming in Rough Water

By Elizabeth Mattson
Staff Writer

When someone brings up Michael Phelps, the first thing that usually comes to mind is his record breaking eight gold medals. However, that may change due to his choice of recreational activities. Recently a British newspaper released a photo of Michael Phelps using a bong. The picture was taken at a house party in South Carolina where Michael was surrounded by girls wanting to date him and boys who wanted to be his best friend. This is not the first time he has run into the law; he was caught drinking and driving a few years ago but was only fined \$250 and was put on probation for fourteen months.

Pot is not considered an enhancement drug so it will not do anything to his medals or records and the incident oc-

curred after the Olympics and testing does not take place after competing is done. When Michael came back from the Olympics in Beijing he had a long break from swimming and breaks like this give athletes time to do whatever they want without having to worry about getting caught by a drug test.

Phelps has apologized many times for his bad judgment and behavior. He claims he is just a "kid" and that due to his youth we should look past his mistakes and forget the whole ordeal. But should we forget something like this? He's no longer a kid; he's 23. He competed in the '08 Olympics and brought back eight gold medals, the most anyone has won in one haul. Competing in the Olympics is a huge honor that many work for their whole lives. People admire Phelps because he is good enough to

compete and because he is one of the best athletes in the world. He has millions of dollars in endorsements and pressure to stay the best for the upcoming Olympics in London. All the pressure might have been the reason behind his bad choices. He might've gone drinking and smoking pot to blow off steam from all the pressure people and coaches give him. Due to his actions Kellogg's cereal and snack company won't renew their contract with him because his behavior doesn't fit with the Kellogg image. Most of his major sponsors such as; Visa Inc., Speedo, luxury Swiss watchmaker Omega and sports beverage PureSport's maker Human Performance Labs, have stayed with him after the news regardless of his behavior.

These companies aren't setting a good example by not caring about a world

wide known person's bad choice. It would be different if Michael Phelps was only sixteen and was still learning to make decisions for himself, but he's not he's at an age where the average person is finishing college and settling down. Hopefully being banned for three months and losing money in endorsements will settle him down.



Swimming against the tide!

Athletes of the Week

By Dayna Pearson
Staff Writer

This week's Male athlete of the week is Keith Wasserzieher. Keith is captain of the Aitkin High School Wrestling team. He is currently placed 8th in State with a record of 21 wins and 3 losses.

Overall, Keith has brought hard work and leadership skills on and off the mat. He has been in wrestling since he was in elementary school. Keith's favorite thing about

Wrestling is the feeling of accomplishment when your hand is raised after a victory. The wrestling team has done well this year. "We are a young team trying to fill big shoes," commented Keith.

When not trying to cut weight or practicing, Keith enjoys being outdoors. "I like anything with a motor," commented Keith. Good luck and enjoy the rest of your season.



**Aitkin senior wrestler
Keith Wasserzieher.**

By Hannah Spicer
Staff Writer

Kristy Hoge, number 50, for the Aitkin Gobblers girls' basketball team has been having a great season. She plays guard, and her team record is now 19-1. She enjoys going to eat at Allie's, watching JV, and

eating Swedish Fish before her games. After school she plans on attending a four year college for education. She loves to eat chicken enchiladas and watch Step Brothers. Her trademark is her black socks.



**Basketball player
Kristy Hoge**

Jan. 10, 2009

SPORTS

9

Lady Ballas Win "Game of the Decade"



After game celebration

Kyle Hanson
Staff Writer

On January 6, 2009, the girl's basketball team had fought a long hard battle against Braham and they had won the battle with the score of 74-73. A month later, it was payback time for Braham and it became the "game of the decade".

The game at home against Braham Thursday night started looking hopeless, when the Bombers basically clobbered them with a 20 point lead in the first half. The girl's performance was initially pretty sloppy and the girls were tripping over each other, loosing the ball, etc.

After halftime, the girls' performance improved and they started

to crank up the score, which considerably heated up the gym some more. There was more improved shooting, the passing was more intense, and the defense was a lot more organized. The ones that got the most points in the game were Emily Mehr and Meredith Chaput. Sara even had to wrestle her way into winning this game. Even the ones like Lena Montano, Allie Carlson, and Kristy Hoge got off the bench and contributed very well to the game.

The game reached its climax when they were tied and the game went into overtime. During that four minute period, there was a heated battle between the Bombers and the Gobblers and at the end of the game.....THE GOBBLERS WON! COME ON DOWN AND PARTY!!! The final score was 74-71, which was better than the last time they played Braham. The game also had a record number of fans and they were insane. Throughout the game, the fans were trying their hardest to get the Gobblers to win, even in the most ridiculous ways. The boy's basketball team had hosted a blackout and made all the fans wear black just to intimidate the other team. The crowd made a deafening roar when they got closer and closer to winning the game. There was



Aitkin crowd goes wild

a huge celebration that looked like a rally

when they won the "game of the decade". The All Starz danced at halftime and that was their last home performance before they go to state, the pep band played, and a crazy mascot kept the crowd pumped throughout the game.

The girl's basketball team is the #1 team in the conference and they are most likely to sweep the playoffs and for time in history, go to STATE! But before that could happen, they got a few more games to play and many opportunities before they can

All Starz Reach for State

Staff Writer
Dayna Pearson

The section tournament for Dance was hosted at Aitkin on January 31st. The Aitkin All Starz had an amazing day taking 1st place in High Kick and 2nd place in Jazz. The team travels to State on February 12th, which will take place in Minneapolis at the Target Center. High Kick will compete on Friday, February 13th and Jazz will compete on Saturday, February 14th.

The girls have had an amazing season ending with a record of six 1st place trophies and one 2nd place trophy in High Kick and Jazz with a record of six 1st place trophies and taking 2nd place at sections.

The girls have worked hard this season pouring their hearts out on and off the dance floor. They treat each other like family which has led them to work well together. The girl's hard work has paid off; let's wish them good luck as they head to state to take their well earned place.



The All Starz High Kick in action.

One act falls just short of state

By Kylie O'Neil
Staff Writer

The one act play cast traveled to Hibbing last weekend on Saturday to perform their play "Frostbite" at the Hibbing Community College. Aitkin competed against five other towns including Chisholm, Cook, Moose Lake, Ely, and Esko. They tied for second, but then placed third because of judge's preference.

There are three judges that watch every play. Each judge has a critique sheet that they make comments on as they watch the play. After the play is over, the play cast goes into a room with one of the judges and listens to their comments and what they thought of the play. After all the plays have been performed, the judges put up a list rating each play 1-5, with five being the worst and one being the best.



Kevin Hughes and Alice Browning perform their parts.

To make it into sections Aitkin had to place first or second in subsections, but to make it to state, Aitkin would

have had to place first in sections.

The play is about three teenagers who go into the woods in search of something to do and they end up finding a little boy that claims to be a hundred years old. The little boy turns into a Japanese woman and tells them a Japanese folk tale. The moral of the folk tale teaches the teenagers that you shouldn't waste time in your life.

Aslyn Blake, who plays Kira, one of the teenagers in the play, thinks that their performance at sections went really well and one of the reasons they got marked off was because one of the judges had a hard time understanding what the play.

Mrs. Blake said she was very happy with how the cast performed and said everyone did awesome.

Speech team competes at McGregor meet

By Lacy Watkins
Staff Writer

"Speech is forensics" says Coach Ellison of the Speech Team. Speech is a mixture of Public Speaking and performance art. There are 13 categories ranging between great speeches such as the restating of JFK Inauguration, to Creative Speeches of your own where you can show personality and humor. A bus leaves at six in the morning for any of their Saturday meets where they travel all over to present their speeches. A meet consists of three rounds, three times with three judges.

Speech isn't like a basketball game where parents and the community come to support their home team. It's not that they can't, they just don't, almost as if speech is invisible to the community. This



The speech team posed for a picture at Onamia earlier this year.

is okay for the speech members because they know that this activity will help them greatly in the future.

One thing I found interesting about Speech is that you don't have to memorize your speech at all. In fact, you can hold your paper and read right off of it

when you are performing. The only disadvantage to this is there are very competitive kids in Speech and the memorization gets you points. Eventually, they will pass you up and you will fall by the waste side. Another thing I found interesting was when you think speech you think a huge audience and a lot of judgments but in reality the Speech Individuals or Duets perform in front of a maximum of 6-10 people and its not in an auditorium its usually in a small classroom.

Mr. Ellison realizes that it isn't easy being in sports and extracurricular activities so he tries to make practice times flexible and according to your schedule. Meets can be individual as well, because of the flexibility, they could have 3 people at a meet one day and 20 people the next. New members are always welcomed.

Feb 12, 2009

VARIETY 

11

'Flipped' Shows Both Worlds

By Lauren Landrus
Staff Writer

"Flipped" is a comical novel about questioning what you believe in and realizing the important things in life. The story is told by two characters, Bryce and Julie in alternating chapters. When Bryce moves into the neighborhood in second grade, he portrays Julie as a crazy girl. She climbs trees, is obsessed with him and is always running around all over the place. Bryce literally runs and hides from her on occasion.

Of course, Julie tells it from a completely different point of view. She professes how wonderful Bryce is and how much he needs her help. Usually, she just sits in her driveway and waits for him to come out of his house.

As the characters grow up and we get to know both of their families, we start to see many differences. Bryce's family is the "picture perfect" family, while Julie's seems to be dysfunctional. Julie's yard is always a mess. Their house is pretty much falling apart and they have a "crappy" van, according to



Bryce.

Bryce's family doesn't exactly approve of Julie's, but they don't know that

Julie's dad has a mentally handicapped brother that they use all of their money to take care of. As the story goes on, Bryce starts to realize that just because Julie lives in a crappy house and has a different family, doesn't mean they aren't "cool." They are actually very down to earth and loving. He also starts to see how his family works, his father is ignorant and judgmental and his mom has a lot of problems.

Just as Bryce is realizing appearances and social statuses aren't everything, Julie realizes Bryce isn't worth her time. You'll have to read the book to find out what happens when it finally hits Bryce in the head that Julie's weirdness and compassion for things that she cares about is a good thing.

The story doesn't just have a good message for kids, but for adults as well. It is a really big eye opener, and I wish all parents who think their kids are "too good" to play or hang out with other kids would read it. The book makes you realize that appearances have nothing to do with reality and who we are as people.

Jon & Kate Plus Eight Details Life of Multiples

By Abby Palkie
Staff Writer

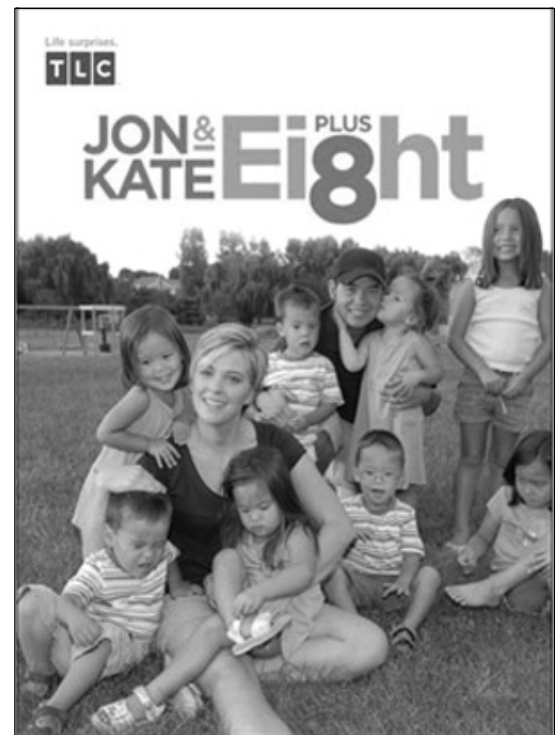
Jon and Kate Plus 8 is a television series on TLC about an everyday, ordinary family with two sets of multiples. It goes into the life of how Jon and Kate Gosselin manage to raise a set of twins and a set of sextuplets, in their everyday life. The Gosselin family lives in Pennsylvania. Mady and Cara are their 8 year old twins; and Alexis, Aaden, Collin, Leah, Hannah, and Joel are their 4 year old sextuplets.

The twins and sextuplets keep Jon and Kate very busy. Each and every one of the Gosselin's has their own personality and act so differently from each other. It keeps the

show entertaining. And they are so energetic. It's great! There are all sorts of different things that happen during this show, and it's realistic. Nothing that I've seen looks and or seems unrealistic. This television show can always puts a smile on your face. Jon and Kate Plus 8 is a documentary-style reality show. Jennifer Stocks is the Producer and Director of Jon and Kate Plus 8.

How do Jon and Kate manage raising two sets of multiples? Watch a new episode of Jon and Kate Plus 8 on TLC every Monday night at 8:00 p.m., and watch the life of the Gosselins.

I rate this show 4.5 stars out of 5.





Calendar

Thurs. Feb. 12

Boys Hockey at Wadena-Deer Creek, 7:00 p.m.
Basketball Boys vs Moose Lake, 6:00 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 13

Wrestling at Braham, 4:00 p.m.
Basketball Girls at Pequot Lakes, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 14

Speech at Ogilvie, 8:30 a.m.
Speech at Eveleth-Gilbert, 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 17

Basketball Girls at Brainerd, 4:00 p.m.
Boys Hockey at Prairie Centre,

5:00 p.m.

Basketball Boys at Braham, 6:00 p.m.

Basketball Girls at Crosby-Ironton, 6:00 p.m.

Friday, Feb 20

Wrestling Boys at Braham, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, Feb 21

Basketball Girls at Proctor, 5:00 p.m.

Monday, Feb 23

Basketball Boys at Isle 4:30PM

Tuesday, Feb 24

Basketball Boys at East Central, 6:00 p.m.

Lunch Menu

Feb. 12
EGG BISCUIT
OR
CEREAL &
YOGURT
MILK & JUICE

CR WILD RICE
SOUP
SANDWICH
VEG / DIP
FRUIT
SHERBET

Feb. 13
ROLL
CEREAL
MILK & JUICE

PIZZA
BROCCOLI
SALAD
FRESH FRUIT
DESSERT
EARLY OUT

Feb. 17
MUFFIN
CEREAL
MILK & JUICE

CHEESE-
BURGER
FRENCH FRIES
BAKED BEANS
COOKIE

Feb. 18
BISMARCK
CEREAL
MILK & JUICE

MINI CORN
DOGS
MAC/ CHEESE
CAL. BLEND
FRUIT
APPLE CRISP

Feb. 19
EGG BISCUIT
OR
CEREAL &
YOGURT
MILK & JUICE

TURKEY
GRAVY
MASHED PO-
TATOES
CORN
CRANBERRIES

DRESSING

Feb. 20
SAUSAGE
POCKET
CEREAL
MILK & JUICE

CHOICE SAND-
WICH
HOMEMADE
CHICKEN
NOODLE SOUP
VEG / DIP
FRESH FRUIT
RICE KRISPY
BAR

Feb. 23
SAUSAGE
GRAVY
BISCUIT
CEREAL
MILK & JUICE

CHICKEN
PATTY
TATOR TRIES
PEAS
FRUIT

Gobbler Gaffes

