

Nancy Mollhagen Set to Retire Loy Norrix Will be Losing its Splash of Color



Lucas Leibold
Knight Life News

Nancy Mollhagen is famous, and has been teaching here at her alma mater, Loy Norrix, since 1987. It is truly a loss for a student at Loy Norrix not to have an art class with her at some point throughout their high school career.

Violet Humphreys, an alumni from 2009 fondly remembers her independent study with Ms. Mollhagen, “I used to love listening to the groovy music she played while we worked,” said Humphreys. Many students have never forgotten Nancy Mollhagen.

Ms. Mollhagen is the type of teacher that really sparks a students imagination; the average individual cannot match her eccentricity and energy, for she is truly one of a kind.

see MOLLHAGEN page 6

Nancy Mollhagen gives the wealth of knowledge to sophomore Sylvia Albeo. Nancy loves to get hands on with her students, and show rather than tell.

Daniela Paz / Knight Life News



Loy Norrix Loses Yet Another Beloved Alumni

Marta Grabowski
KnightLife News

Sunday, April 22, Brian Tolson was shot and killed. Brian was only 19 years old.

Brian graduated from Loy Norrix last year and was attending Kalamazoo Valley Community College. The shock from his unexpected death was immediate. Soon after the shooting the word got out that Brian was the victim of the shooting. Those who knew Brian and loved him expressed their sorrow and disbelief online. Facebook status after status expressed extreme sadness and shock over Brian, lovingly referred to as Big B, being gone.

Big B was larger than life, literally, and had a smile and heart to match it. Almost all who knew Brian did not hesitate to mention how Brian always made people laugh and was always there to put a smile on someone’s face. Brian’s funeral made it clear that many loved him and that our community has suffered a remarkable loss.

What will it take to stop the deaths of young brilliant minds? How many more Big B’s will we lose? Violence will never be the answer and only creates more problems. As a community we need to put a stop to the violence surrounding us and protect our community in a smart and rational way.

Jacob Stempky, Loy Norrix Class of 2011

“He was a kid that everyone got along with. He always looked out for the well being of others that he had some sort of relationship with. He always knew how to make people laugh.”

Travis Curtis, Loy Norrix Class of 2011

“Brian was one of the funniest people I know. Whenever you were mad or sad, all you had to do was go sit with him and you would cheer up in no time. He was a good person over all; he was friends with everyone and wasn’t afraid to say what was on his mind.”



Born: January 14, 1993
Passed: April 22, 2012

Ryan Minshall, former Loy Norrix student

“He was all laughs. He changed his life around and was determined to become somebody. He started off rough and had a change of heart. Brian was the type that even if he was down he did not want his friends to be down, and he would do everything in his power to put a smile on their face. He had the greatest sense of humor and was really laid back. He didn’t let anything affect him personally. He didn’t get into any drama or rumors in high school. He would give us advice when we were feeling down.

It’s almost like he had a sixth sense for it. Brian could tell

when one of his homies was down or upset and his goal for that day would be to change it around. He also stood up for his friends no matter what the occasion.”

Mikayla Brown, Loy Norrix Senior

“Brian was always so nice to me and would always take time to talk to me about whatever. He was such a nice guy and never had anything bad to say about anyone. He was a great person to have class with.”

Ashly Chimmner, Loy Norrix Class of 2011

“I’ve known Brian since we were at Milwood middle. He was a very goofy person and he was often making others smile. You didn’t have to be close to him to know that he was a good guy. He was going to Kalamazoo Valley Community College to better his life. He will be missed by so many. R.I.P. Brian.”

Domonique Essix, Loy Norrix Class of 2011

“Brian had such a calm, cool, & complex attitude. He encouraged me not to quit school. The last thing I remember him saying to me last week was ‘Strive and stay alive. You’re doing the right thing.’”

Jacob Namenye, Loy Norrix Class of 2011

“He would talk to anybody. He was everyone’s best friend. One of the best people I’ve known got stuck in the worst possible situation.”

Sue Mills, Business Education Teacher

“I was stunned when I heard Brian had passed. He was such a kind, generous soul I couldn’t imagine that someone killed him. He was the life of the classroom. His playful personality made school fun.

His homegoing service was a testament to him and a reminder of how quickly a life can be taken through senseless violence. Brian touched many lives on his journey. May we appreciate the gift he gave each of us through his friendship.”

Former Norrix Knight is Remembered

Keith Toornman
Knight Life News



Elizabeth and her family in front of an Apache helicopter. Elizabeth’s husband Julian is an Apache pilot in the United States military.



Born: April 22, 1984
Passed: April 24, 2012

Born on April 22, 1984, Elizabeth Ann White was the second daughter of parents Ruth and Dennis. Her older sister Andrea Jean White was three years old and was very excited about getting a new little sister. Andrea did everything possible for her new sister. She could understand her “baby talk” and they did everything together. Then a few years after Elizabeth’s birth, their parents divorced and their father moved to Kentucky. Soon after this both of their parents remarried. They got along well with both of their new step parents and visited their father whenever possible. In the year 1994 Ruth and Bill Toornman had a baby son named Keith Alan Toornman. In the same year, Liz was diagnosed with epilepsy.

Liz attended Milwood Middle School where she was first

introduced to volunteering. In middle school she volunteered at nursing homes with a group of kids from her school. She attended Loy Norrix High School where she got even more involved in volunteering. Liz started helping at the Kalamazoo Drop-In Child Care Center, the American Red Cross, and Binder Park Zoo. After graduating in 2002, she attended both Michigan State University and Western Michigan University for a short time.

While working at Target as a part time job, Liz met Julian Diaz. They married in 2003 and then in 2004 they had their first son, Cristian Diaz. Because Julian was in the military, the family moved multiple times within the United States. Three years after the birth of Cristian they had their second child, Amelia

Diaz. They continued to move around America until they were transferred to South Korea.

Liz loved to travel and see the world. Several years later Julian was sent to Afghanistan, so Liz and her kids moved back near her dad in Kentucky. Liz spent a majority of her time with her family and children.

Then on Tuesday April 24, 2012, just two days after her 28th birthday, she passed away in her sleep. This came as a shock to everyone who knew her. She was buried next to her grandfather in the Schoolcraft Cemetary. Liz always loved spending lots of time with her family going on vacations. She also loved being artistic and painted whenever possible.



4/22/91
Elizabeth (left) at her 7th birthday party with her cousins Cristine Essar and Cara Munson. They all remained close friends throughout their lives.



Miki Patel / Knight Life News

AP Chemistry students, Ari Solomon and Jessica Lethiot, conduct experiments for their final project. They dissolved styrofoam using different types of acids.

AP Enrollment in KPS is on the Rise

Miki Patel

Knight Life News

As a large number of high school students take advanced placement (AP) classes, what fuels the panic for most students taking AP courses are the end of year exams. These exams, which is taken in May, determines whether or not a student will receive college credit for the class taken at the high school level.

Counselors and teachers at Loy Norrix have been striving to get students to take as many AP courses as possible and they have succeeded. A couple of years back, students didn't have as many AP classes to choose from. Nine different AP courses were added just in the past four years. Some of these courses include Biology, Physics, and Statistics.

There are numerous reasons students take AP courses. One reason is to raise their grade point average since AP courses are based on a 5.0 GPA rather than the usual 4.0. Another reason is to impress colleges by taking challenging courses.

AP courses help students acquire the skills they need to succeed in college. AP is not necessarily a college course, but it is a good preparation for college level work.

Sean Bergan, a psychology teacher at Loy Norrix, explains the similarities between AP Psychology and college level Psychology.

"AP Psychology is just an introduction to Psychology," said Bergan. "It's just an overarching view of psychological matters; it doesn't go in depth like college Psychology.

A couple of years ago, freshmen were unable to take AP classes; however, AP World History is now a class that has been added for freshmen to take.

Freshman Naomi Sarelis takes AP World History because regular classes are too easy and she gets A's in all of her classes, so she wanted to take a challenging course.

"AP at the beginning was tough and juggling sports was challenging and then the heap settled in and it was okay," said Sarelis. "It's a struggle, especially coming from middle school, 'cause teachers aren't babying you anymore so it's a big jump."

Students that were sophomores a couple years back could only take AP US History as an AP class. Now, sophomores do not have a limitation on how many AP classes they can take.

Lots of students actually back down from taking AP classes because they have a feeling that the class will be extremely difficult and they will not do so well in the class. These students usually regret not taking AP classes

when they get to college. They start to realize that they are not college ready because they did not do everything possible in high school to prepare themselves for college.

According to the AP equity policy statement, "all students deserve an opportunity to participate in rigorous and academically challenging courses and programs." However, many of the students who should be taking AP courses aren't taking advantage of the AP program even though it could be quite beneficial to them.

The grading of the AP exam is based on scores from one through five with one being the lowest and five being the highest score someone can get. A three or above is considered a passing grade, but whether or not someone gets college credit really depends on the college they will be attending after high school. For example, Western Michigan University will give credit for a three or higher, but University of Michigan will only give credit for a four or higher.

According to College Board, 3.4 million AP assessments were taken by students at over 18 thousand high schools. The AP Program, which is run by College Board, offers 34 courses in a variety of subject areas. These subjects include areas in math, science, social studies, language, music, literature, and computer science.

According to the LNHS Annual Education Report, 251 Norrix students enrolled in college level coursework during the 2010 – 2011 school year compared to 187 students during the 2009 – 2010 school year. One hundred and thirty two students received college credit during the 2010 – 2011 school year by taking AP courses and 90 students received college credit during the 2009 – 2010 school year.

The number of students who are passing AP exams with a three or higher is gradually rising although the majority of AP students do not give it their all during AP testing.

According to the newspaper "Arizona Central," 5,985 students passed with a three or higher on at least one AP exam in 2008 compared to 3,715 students in 2003.

Taking an AP class is worth it even if the exam may not go accordingly due to the level of difficulty. At least one will be ready to tackle the same class when they have it in college. If college is a goal, AP classes are worth it. Remember, a GPA in college is also essential for internships or jobs so taking the same class again at the college level can increase one's GPA. It is better to focus on getting a better education rather than passing an exam for college credit.



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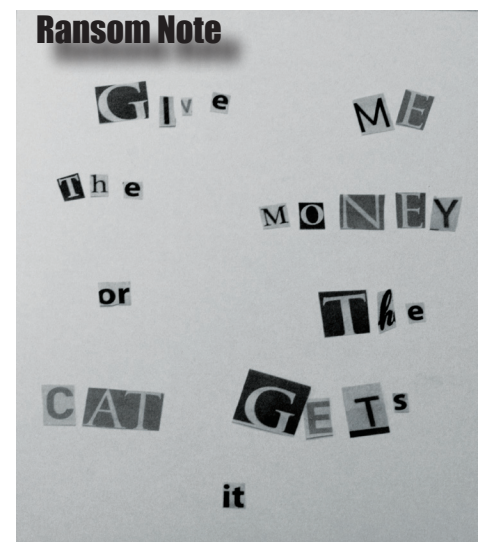
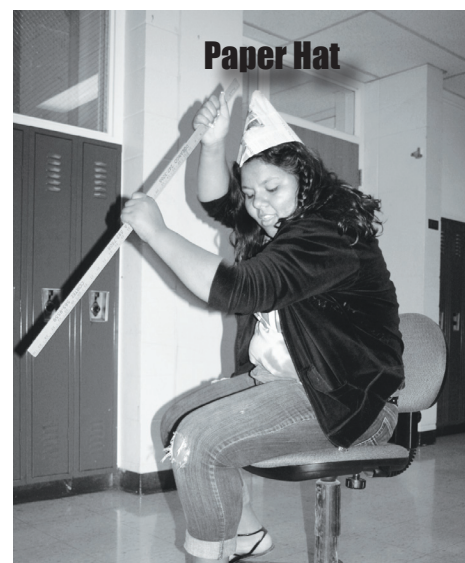
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30 Things To Do With Your Knight Life Newspaper When You Are Done Reading It

Leah Rathbun
Knight Life News

It's the last issue of Knight Life and you all have an entire summer to cherish your newspaper. Instead of throwing it away, here a few ideas of alternative things to do with your newspaper when you're done reading it.

1. Make a paper hat
2. Recycle
3. Design a dress
4. Wrap a present
5. Use it as insulation for your house
6. Use it as a fire starter
7. Floor mats for your car
8. Extract the ink and put it in your empty pens
9. Use it as toilet paper
10. Give someone a paper cut
11. Use it as a band-aid
12. Blow your nose
13. Make a paper airplane
14. Read it as a bedtime story
15. Leave it in a public place for others to read
16. Use it as a parachute
17. Clean up a spill
18. Feed it to your goat
19. Kill a bug
20. Pick up dog poop
21. Make a litter box
22. Clean up the oil spill
23. Stuff your bra
24. Sword fight
25. Paper maché
26. Use it as a fly swatter
27. Create a ransom note
28. Emergency underwear
29. Makeup blotter
30. Frame it in your living room



Leah Rathbun / Photo Illustration

Informal Group of Acquaintances Beat Each Other with Foam Swords

Adam Kemp
Knight Life News



Adam Kemp / Knight Life News

FLARPY co-founders Doug Keto (left) and Keith Toornman (right) spar at the Keto house to hone their skills. Keto uses a sword and buckler while Toornman wields a war hammer.

FLARPY is an informal club of high school aged teens from Kalamazoo, Comstock, Schoolcraft, and Portage. The club was formed in the summer of 2011 and since then, nearly 20 people have participated. FLARPY stands for the Federation of Live Action Role Playing for Youngsters. Live action role-playing is when people play the role of a self-imagined character as they battle each other with foam weapons.

"Who doesn't like actually beating people with swords?" said co-founder Doug Keto.

FLARPY's formation has been a long time coming. Senior Keith Toornman and his cousin Doug Keto from Comstock have had imaginative role playing adventures since they were toddlers.

"We would always get together and play with sticks or bats in the woods," said Keto.

A few years ago Keto began crafting weapons to simulate swords more realistically.

"At first, we cut the heads off of golf clubs and stuck pool noodles on them and hit each other with them," said Keto. "They've gotten safer since then...thank God."

Newer, safer versions of the weapons are made with PVC pipe, foam pool noodles, and gorilla tape, among other things. These new tools were used to safely spar with each other. Keto and Toornman decided that fighting with the newly crafted weapons was pretty fun, but the activity needed some depth, so they began creating a system of rules.

FLARPY members create their own character with a race and class. Depending on the race you choose, you will have different skills and weaknesses. Your class determines

the weapons you will be able use. Keto and Toornman made each race and class have its own advantages and disadvantages and tried to make sure no player would be too weak or too powerful.

When the game is played, players just have to try to hit each other with their weapons and not get hit. Getting hit on a leg makes you have to hop on one leg until you heal, if you are able to do so. A strike on the arm renders you unable to wield a weapon or shield with that hand. A player loses when they take a hit in the abdomen or lose all of their limbs. Players gain experience toward leveling up when they win a battle, and each level up may bring the player new strengths and abilities.

FLARPY is not the only group of its kind around. A group called NERO Kalamazoo meets in Parchment. To participate in NERO there is a \$40 preregistration fee and a \$50 fee at the door of any event. Members of more serious and organized live action role playing groups like this usually dress in elaborate costumes and have to stay in character during events. The focus of FLARPY is less on the role playing aspect and more on the combat.

Anyone is welcome to join in the adventure and action of FLARPY. You play for free and you can either borrow a weapon or buy one from Keto for about ten dollars. Not only is it fun and free, it's a great way to get some exercise.

"People like to play video games like World of Warcraft, so why not do something similar but make it physically active?" said Keto.

Joining is very easy and informal. Just talk to anyone who participates or take a look at the FLARPY group page on Facebook.

Angie Laginess

English teacher, Angie Laginess puts a great emphasis on her family and relationships.

"My best friend and I got matching bird tattoos which are a cross between a hummingbird and a sparrow. The bird is symbolic because they come in pairs and stay together for life. We've been friends for over twenty years"

Morgan Paige

Morgan Paige is a senior as well as a teen mom who got her tattoo to express her love for her daughter.

"I got pregnant at fourteen. Zanaya is my daughter's name, I got it after she was born. I love my baby, and I intend on getting a mayflower underneath it because she was born in May."

Danny Newhouse

Danny Newhouse has multiple tattoos all over his arms. An interesting piece is the weeping Statue of Liberty on his bicep.

"I actually got it out of a study guide. I feel like Lady Liberty wouldn't be proud of the way America is today, we have fallen so low on the totem pole over the years and its because of ignorance in our society. Generations are getting worse and worse as they come. I believe that we are causing America's downfall!"



Asia Davis
Knight Life News

Loy Norrix Makes Body Art Personal

Tattoos have been around for thousands of years, and thrive in many different cultures. In 1991 Otzi was discovered in a glacier in the Alps between Austria and Italy. Otzi is from 3300 BC; making him almost fifty three hundred years dead. Otzi is the oldest evidence of tattoos, having them on his shoulder and hands. Scientist think that the tattoos were used for medical purposes such as arthritis. Tattoos hold symbolism, and importance to the one with them. Both students and teachers at Norrix have tattoos and bridge another gap between the young and their elders. Every tattoo has a story.

Trey Williams

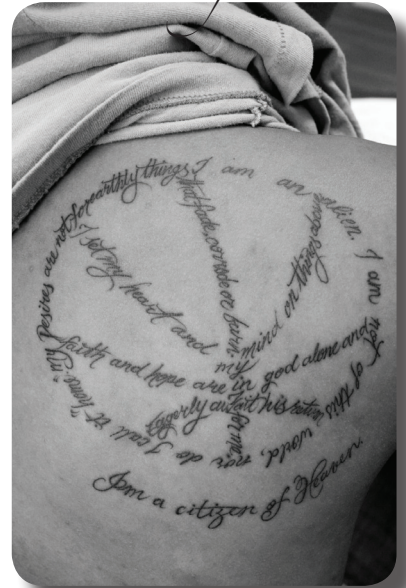
Junior Trey Williams has a great relationship with his brother and they've been close since childhood.

"My brother has the other half of the tattoo which is laughing face. The saying that goes along with the faces is 'laugh now, cry later'. Meaning be happy while you can and worry about things later."

Johnathan Henry

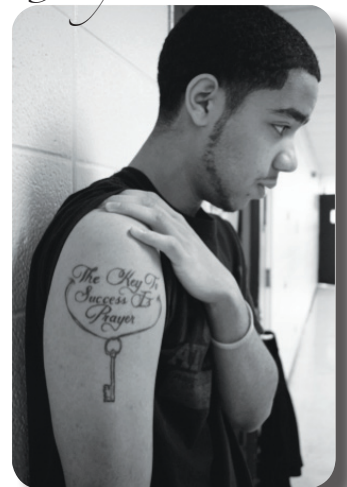
Johnathan Henry is a junior who found a connection with his father through body art.

"My tattoo is a symbol of my dad. I got the tattoo because me and my dad are very close to each other and we was ripped apart two years ago. I am just like my dad when it comes to things. So I got this tatt so that I won't be sad anymore, but happy that I have something to resemble my dad."

Devin Hegler

Devin Hegler found a way to incorporate his love for God and basketball into one piece.

"My tattoo says 'I am alien. I am not of this world nor do I call it home. My desires are not of earthly things. My faith is something that will not fade, burn, or corrode. I set my mind on things above, and I eagerly await his return. I am a citizen of Heaven.' I am very strong in my Christian faith. It was on a folder I have and it really struck me. I got it in the shape of a basketball because it's a passion of mine."

Jalyn Fair

Junior Jalyn Fair is ambitious and driven. He's seventeen and owns his own recording studio.

"The meaning of my tattoo is that the key to being successful is prayer. Without God I can't be successful. When I say successful that revolves around success in my music, or a career that will pay my bills. Not only that, but anything I do in life, such as graduating high school. If you're struggling sometimes you gotta pray and ask for help.... So to me the key to success is prayer."

Class of 2013 Will Miss Out on the College Advisor

Regina Love
Knight Life News

In past years, there has been a position at Loy Norrix with the title College Advisor through a program with the National College Advising Corp and its subdivision Michigan College Advising Corp. The position gave Loy Norrix’s college advisor the power to help students apply for colleges, financial aid and scholarships. This program will be ending this June with the class of 2012.

Jamilah George currently holds the position of college advisor and leaving this year brings up many different emotions for her.

“I’m sad, very, very sad. I wish there was an opportunity for me to stay, but at the same time me leaving is a demonstration of what I do here at Norrix. I’m also pursuing higher education this fall at Yale University,” said George.

After helping so many students George said, “It feels great. It’s been a privilege to be able to impact so many students in one year. The relationships I’ve been able to build have influenced me as an educator.”

George has done a lot for the students here at Loy Norrix, especially the seniors. She gave students a reason to be excited and students were rewarded for their pursuit of higher education with prizes and a scheduled event called Decision Day.

Next fall, the position won’t be here at Loy Norrix, so the college advising job will be left to the counsellors.

“I’m disappointed,” said George, “This is a really great program, no matter who occupies the position. It dramatically influences the student body and the community too. The position encourages the students to take advantage of the Promise because students won’t know what its like to go to college without it.”

The Loy Norrix guidance office isn’t as worried about the elimination of the position as the students. In the past they dealt with the workload and will deal with it again.

“[There is] no extra pressure whatsoever. We can handle all of the students’ questions and anything else they need. There wasn’t always a college advisor so we are going back to what we are used to,” said Sharondra Moore from the guidance office.

The students here at Loy Norrix who got to know George personally are more affected by her leaving.

Twins Devin and Damien Hegler are going to Kellogg Community College to play basketball in the fall and without Jamilah George it wouldn’t be possible.

“She helped us fill out college applications, the FAFSA, and helped us find different programs at our school,” said Devin.

“I love her. I wish that we all could have had the chance to meet her our freshman year,” said Devin.

“She also helped us pick out our majors and what other schools accepted them for when we transfer,” said Damien.

“I just want her to know how much I love



Gwendolyn DeYoung / Guest Photographer

Jamilah George (center) is pictured with seniors Sofia Parker, Brenden Groggel, Ray Von Jones, and Shaquila Haywood. The picture was taken at fellow senior, Valorian Cunningham’s signing party for Wayne State.

her and how much I appreciate everything she has done for me. She never turns anyone away and she takes everything she does so seriously,” said Damien.

The twins, Devin and Damien aren’t the

only ones who are going to miss her. There are over a hundred other students that Jamilah George’s presence in Loy Norrix has affected. For many, without her, their dreams of going off to college wouldn’t be possible.

Colorful Art Teacher Nancy Mollhagen Ready to Retire

MOLLHAGEN from page 1

Nancy Mollhagen is famous, and has been teaching here at her alma mater, Loy Norrix, since 1987. It is truly a loss for a student at Loy Norrix not to have an art class with her at some point throughout their high school career.

Violet Humphreys, an alumni from 2009 fondly remembers her independent study with Ms. Mollhagen, “I used to love listening to the groovy music she played while we worked,” said Humphreys. Many students have never forgotten Nancy Mollhagen.

Ms. Mollhagen is the type of teacher that really sparks an individual’s imagination; the average individual cannot match her eccentricity and energy, for she is truly one of a kind. Nancy Mollhagen has been teaching since she was eighteen, the summer after her graduation from Loy Norrix she took a job teaching art at a Girl Scout camp. Other stages of her art career have included teaching preschoolers, alternative adult education, senior citizens, and college students at Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo Valley Community College. It seems fitting that Mollhagen has made a complete circuit and wound up back at Loy Norrix for 25 years before ending her teaching career.

Yes, Nancy Mollhagen has chosen to take on retirement after the conclusion of this 2012 school year. However she would say that she is off to bigger and better things. Mollhagen’s current future plan is to attend Clown College and become the joyous “Itchy-Patches.” Instead of blowing up and tying balloons, Itchy-Patches plans to entertain senior citizens in-between acts at a senior only strip club. I mean, you’ve got to keep life interesting!

On a more appropriate spectrum, Mollhagen will be creating a lot of art, showing her work in galleries around Kalamazoo, and overall having a grand ol’ time.

“Ms. Mollhagen is just herself, and she doesn’t care. That is the most important thing she has ever taught me.”

-Brandon Salinaz

“Teaching here at Loy Norrix has made me incredibly ADHD,” said Mollhagen, “It is just overwhelming to be running around and playing role model, counselor and police officer for teenagers every day.”

However, the taxing effects of immature students are not the sole reason of her retirement, “I will qualify for a senior 504 plan,”

said Mollhagen. “It’s just not a good time for art in public schools, Art is on its way out for the next decade or two.”

To Ms. Mollhagen, it seems as if the school fills studio classes with an overflow of students. Mollhagen continued, “An elective for all practical purposes is no longer an elective.”

The fact that elective classes are not predominately a choice for students here at Loy Norrix is disappointing to Ms. Mollhagen, many students are enrolled into art classes here that do not “elect” to be so.

However, this is a double-sided spectrum. Many students fall in love with the imaginarium (imagination discovery center) of Nancy Mollhagen and come running back each year to take another class with her.

Brandon Salinaz is currently taking his fourth class with Ms. Mollhagen and has built a friendly relationship with her.

“Ms. Mollhagen is just herself, and she doesn’t care,” said Salinaz, “That is the most important thing she has ever taught me.”

Every teacher here at Loy Norrix puts their personality into their classrooms and the way they teach. Nancy Mollhagen has a very unique teaching style, no matter the project, she will tell you that your work is terrible, you are lazy, or that your work will amount to nothing. However, her goal is to make the student very angry, and therefore channel more energy, skill and purpose into their work. This creates a much more desirable product and always positively reflects this in the grade book.

Nancy Mollhagen will definitely be a harsh critic to your work; however, her insults are very light-hearted and never would she truly mean any of the things aforementioned.

Violet Humphreys did an independent

study with Mollhagen. “She inspired (my) creativity,” said Humphreys, “and instilled in me, a love of art.”

Although her teaching style may be drastically different from others at this school, that is okay. Art calls for abstract individuals, which is why Nancy Mollhagen fits in incredibly well, her personality is far from conventional. Between classes her doorway is flocked by students, eager to participate in her kooky conversations.

“She has such a perky personality,” said Cindy Van Lieu, AP art teacher here at Loy Norrix. Van Lieu has worked with Nancy Mollhagen for the past ten years, and has developed a good professional relationship with her colleague. “Nancy is definitely an independent thinker and meticulous craftsman. She loves refurbishing old furniture and even worked as an upholsterer.”

On a weekly basis, Nancy Mollhagen makes excursions to various thrift shops, second hand stores, and antique outlets purely in search of “unusual objects,” said Van Lieu.

This is easily determined by walking into the classroom of Nancy Mollhagen. All around the room there is such an assortment of ludicrous possessions that you may think that you are at a costume store, or garage sale.

Loy Norrix will not be the same without Nancy Mollhagen. The A-Wing air will no longer be filled by psychedelic music creeping under her door, and room A-21 will no longer be an imaginarium of free expression.

The most important thing to do is scream, whine, cry and overall throw a tantrum that she will be leaving us, however be happy that she is pursuing her dreams because we all know that she would do the exact same thing for us.

First Generation Graduates Off to College



Seniors Brandie Batten and Noemi Ramos are the first in their families to graduate high school. Because of this, graduation is even more important to them and is a joyous occasion.

Regina Love
Knight Life News

With the end of the school of the 2011- 2012 school year approaching fast, graduation, grad bash, and summer are the only things on the graduating seniors' minds. Loy Norrix is celebrating some amazing seniors this year and the class of 2012 has so much to be proud of. Class of 2012 was the experiment group; they had to deal with the changes from semesters to trimesters, from block scheduling to having five classes, and also the switch to and from standards based grading. Through it all, they made it.

For some seniors, this is much bigger than a high school graduation. They are attending the schools their parents or grandparents attended, and for the some it's the first time someone in their family will have made it to high school graduation. For a select few students they will also be the first ones in their families to make it to college level education.

For senior Brandie Batten graduation is even more important

because her mom did not graduate from high school or go to college. This time of year is not only full of excitement and anticipation but extreme pressure. Not only is Batten dealing with school she is also helping take care of her little brother.

"Sometimes I feel like I'm his parent," said Batten, "My mom is a single parent, so she works a lot and we hardly see her."

"Since my brother was born, it has been hard to maintain the close relationship we always had. Especially when it comes to raising my brother, we argue a lot more," said Batten.

With increased pressure at home, she is also bearing the burden of surpassing her family's expectations. "It makes [graduating] more important to me because it shows my family I can do better than my mom. I've always wanted to do better for myself."

By attending college in the fall after finishing high school will be the start of a better life for Batten.

Senior Noemi Ramos is also the first to graduate from high school and go to college in her family as well.

"It's exciting because I know how proud my family will be of me. It's also a lot more meaningful for me than for a lot of other people here [at Norrix]," said Ramos.

Ramos has been working from the moment she was 16 years old to pay for all of the extra things she liked to buy.

"I started working early and it adds a lot of extra pressure. If I want anything I have to buy it on my own. I even paid for all of my graduation stuff on my own," said Ramos.

"There was never a time when I thought I wouldn't graduate. I had so many people motivating me and I always tried to stay on top of my grades," said Ramos.

This time of year is pure excitement and joy because most of the pressure falls on the shoulders of her younger brother who is a junior here at Loy Norrix.

While their high school experiences have been very similar, they have also been very different. No matter the pressures both Ramos and Batten face on a daily basis both of them will be attending Western Michigan University in the fall of 2012.

Johnny Edwards' First Class Graduates, The Man that Controls the School, Outgoing, Neat and Personal

Racheal Koole
Knight Life News

After four years of high school, students are ready to graduate and enjoy the hot, sweaty weather and the college experience. But then there are those who are not leaving; teachers, janitors and our principal, Johnny Edwards.

The current seniors, the class of 2012, are Edwards' first graduating class. Edwards and the class of 2012 both started Loy Norrix at the same time. They have been together since Fall 2008 when the current seniors entered and Edwards became our school principal.

Edwards graduated from Michigan State majoring in mathematics. Before being the principal of Loy Norrix, he was the vice principal at Saginaw High School. He viewed Loy Norrix as a career move.

"I looked at the district as being progressive. It was a win-win situation," said Edwards.

After being at Norrix for four years, Edwards has defined what he wants to improve in the school. The four main objectives are to increase graduation rates, ACT scores, the number of students going to four years of college, and have more people take Advanced Placement classes.

Several thing that have changed so far include the construction that happened to the floors and the A wing, the tardy policy, and the switch from semesters to trimesters.

Since his first year, Edwards has become more open to students. Edwards is seen walking through the hallways and talking to several students almost everyday. The conversations include almost anything from how the students' days are going to how the student needs to go home and change into something more suitable for school.

Edwards makes sure he does not look depressed or unprofessional.

"I set the tone for our school," said Edwards. "I want to lead with a positive energy for our students."

Edwards makes himself known to the

student population at Loy Norrix and pays attention to some of the inspiring stories that students have that do not necessarily get covered publicly.

"It's the individual stories... those are the great stories no one knows about," said Edwards.

Even during Edwards' first year he became acquaintances with several students. One student was alum Ashley Davis who graduated in 2009. Davis sat on the interview team who interviewed Edwards for the principal job.

"I remember voting for him because he really stood out to me from the other potentials. His experiences in Saginaw were reflective of what Norrix was currently dealing with at the time as far as violence and disciplinary issues were concerned. He was very down to earth and was just very personable during his interview with the student committee," said Davis.

After Davis walked across the stage, her parents sent Edwards a photo of him and Davis shaking hands.

"Me & my mother decided to send him a picture because during the time leading up to graduation, myself and Mr. Edwards had really developed a great bond between school & church. I was on the Student Advisory Council, so I saw him and shared my ideas and perspectives with him very frequently," said Davis.

Edwards still keeps the photo on his desk at all times.

"It's a capturing moment of getting students to the stage.... This is what high school is all about, getting to the stage and walking across," said Edwards.

Edwards is also very supportive of school programs. The Forensics Team at Loy Norrix consistently goes to State's for their pieces.

"Mr. Edwards has been very supportive of our Forensics Team. It took some explanation of how Forensics operates early on, but now he is on-board and is very excited about the team's success," said Forensics Team Coach Celia



Pat Davis / Guest Photographer

Principal Johnny Edwards shakes the hand of Ashley Davis at his first Loy Norrix graduation in 2009. Davis and Edwards still see each other, they sing together at church on Sundays. Edwards keeps this photo on his desk no matter what. Edwards has participated in three LNHS commencement ceremonies.

Weeks.

On May 1st, Edwards opened up even more to the class of 2012 by being the first to sing karaoke during the Decision Day celebration. He sang "The World's Greatest" by R. Kelly.

"I just wanted to add a little spark to the event," said Edwards.

Several students enjoyed the performance.

"It was good because he really cares about the student's success and wanted to show the fun side," said senior Lillian Jackson.

"You don't really think of your principal as outgoing, so it was kind of a surprise," said senior Alfonso Hernandez.

Edwards is the man of the school and looks

out for the students of Loy Norrix. He is not afraid of a little conflict and is willing to get to know the students of Loy Norrix.

"Mr. Edwards also has the most beautiful singing voice & a talented musician. A lot of people at school don't know that about him. I just feel Mr. Edwards is a really great all around person, and I know that he has Norrix's best interest at heart," said Davis. "Those two things combined are why I have such a high level of respect for him. Norrix's really needed someone who was going to take things by the reigns and really push for progression, and I think he is the perfect guy for that. I'm really glad I voted for him."

A Walk Down Memory Lane for the Class of 2012

FRESHMAN YEAR			SOPHOMORE YEAR			JUNIOR YEAR				SENIOR YEAR		
Students were caught watching Pineapple Express as a class with the permission of their substitute.		The entire Freshman Academy took a trip to Craigs Cruisers to celebrate their first year of high school.	We went from our mod schedule from freshman year to block scheduling.	Ian Middleton won the basketball musical chairs to win the class of 2012 points at the Winterfest pep rally.	We had no school due to the spread of H1N1 in school.	Block scheduling was replaced with trimester scheduling.	Class of 2012 beat the seniors in the annual Powderpuff game.	We won the Homecoming Spirit Jug - the only Spirit Jug the class of 2011 did not win.	We had two snow days consecutively.	Seniors beat the juniors in the Homecoming Powderpuff game.	We won the Homecoming and Winterfest Spirit Jugs.	A power outage caused school to be let out early.

Top 3 Elementarys Attended:

1. Milwood
2. Parkwood Upjohn
3. Kazoo School and Paramount

Top 3 Colleges Attending:

1. Western Michigan University
2. Michigan State University
3. KVCC

Most Influential Teacher

-Bowser

Most Attended Sporting Event

-Football

Favorites:

Teacher: Pringle

Security Guard:

Foster (AKA Ampey)

Class:

Art and History classes

Year of High School: Senior

Food: Pizza

Sport: Soccer

Musical Artist: Drake

Trend:

Yoga pants and Skinny jeans

Loy Norrix Seniors Travel Out of State for College

Morgan Steffler
Knight Life News

Ray’Von Jones

University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana

Senior Ray’Von Jones grew up in South Bend, Indiana and is no stranger to the Notre Dame lifestyle.

“Growing up there, everyone is a Notre Dame fan, which was the first thing that made me want to go there. Once I got older, I realized how good of a school it is and people go there from all over the world,” said Jones.

Once she got accepted, Jones knew it was the right step to take. Along with the University of Notre Dame, Jones also got accepted into the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Purdue University, and Saint Mary’s college. Jones plans on double majoring in pre-dental studies and political science.

“Even though they’re both different, pre-dental will prepare me for dental school and political science is something I’m interested in,” said Jones.

At Notre Dame, Jones is considering looking at student government and community service opportunities. Her sophomore year she might continue cheerleading. Jones cannot wait to attend the football games and stand in the student section to cheer on the Fighting Irish.

Overall, Jones is mostly excited to meet new people, move back to where she grew up and where her mom lives, and to, “go to the school I’ve always wanted to, it’s a dream come true,” said Jones.



Brenden Groggel

Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois

Senior Brenden Groggel will be attending Elmhurst College in Illinois to play soccer. Groggel has only visited the campus twice, but he knows it is the right choice for him. Groggel first heard of Elmhurst College when the Elmhurst Men’s soccer coach saw him play in a soccer tournament and contacted him. Soccer is a big part of Groggel’s life; he has been playing soccer since he was three years old.

He is most excited about, “Playing soccer and all of the great experiences that come with that, such as traveling,” said Groggel. Along with playing soccer, Groggel had other factors that helped him decide in committing to Elmhurst College.

“I stayed the night with the team and I enjoyed my experience. I would also get 75 percent of the promise if I stayed in Michigan, and they [Elmhurst] offered me a higher percentage of their tuition,” said Groggel.

Groggel is not frightened to live away from Michigan. Groggel said, “It’s going to be a good experience because it’s not like I’m going to be at home my whole life.”

Groggel is also glad that the college is so close to Chicago. From Elmhurst, there are trains that only take fifteen minutes to get to downtown Chicago.

“It will be nice to get used to a bigger city,” said Groggel.

For the soccer players at Elmhurst, they get to room with another teammate from a different state so they can meet someone from a different background, but also with the same schedule from soccer.

Groggel is planning on planning on playing soccer and getting his prerequisite classes done and then decide from there what he



Mary Farner

Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

Senior Mary Farner will be attending Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut in the fall of 2012. Mary plans to study a combination of physics, math, and computer science. These are Farner’s favorite subjects, and she sees herself doing something in those areas. Along with Yale University, Farner got accepted into the University of Michigan, Kalamazoo College, and Michigan Tech. Farner visited Yale this past summer and “instantly fell in love with the campus, everything about it clicked with me so I decided to apply as a ‘stretch school’,” said Farner.

Living out of state can be difficult for an incoming freshman in college, but Farner is keeping a positive attitude about it.

“I am most excited to be in a whole new place with all new people. Obviously I am nervous about it all, but I’m really excited to be in a new place,” said Farner.

Farner will never forget the day she found out she was accepted into Yale. “I found out online, they had me login into my account that I had made when I applied. Once I logged in it went straight to a page with a giant bulldog, the mascot, and a big ‘Welcome to the Yale class of 2016’ message. At first I couldn’t believe it, and then I just looked at my mom and started screaming,” Farner said.

Now that Farner has committed to Yale, she is excited for the experiences she will have.



Ruby Tanja

Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City, New York

Senior Ruby Tanja will be traveling to New York City in the fall to attend the Fashion Institute of Technology. Tanja has been interested in fashion photography ever since she was in the sixth grade, and she plans to study fashion photography at FIT. Along with the Fashion Institute of Technology, Tanja got accepted into New York University, the School of Visual Arts, Pratt Institute, and the University of Michigan.

Tanja was attracted to traveling to New York for her education because she says, “There is not really an industry for fashion photography or acting for film in Michigan,” Tanja explained.

New York city is over 700 miles away from Kalamazoo, Michigan. Tanja said she is partly terrified about leaving and will miss everyone from home, but also is “excited because there are infinitely more opportunities in the city.” Tanja visited New York for the first time this year, and only visited the campus once before she knew it was the right place for her to go.



SENIOR PLAYLIST

First Day of School

Highway to Hell- ACDC
Pretty Boy Swag- SouljaBoy

Last Day of School

School’s Out- Alice Cooper
What Time Is It- High School Musical

Graduation

Moment 4 Life- Nicki Minaj
World’s Greatest- R. Kelly

College

I Love College- Asher Roth
Shots- LMFAO

Prom

Dance - Big Sean
Ayy Ladies- Travis Porter

Senior Trip

Rack City- Tyga
Party Rock- LMFAO

Skipping Class

Senior Skip Day- Mac Miller
Faded- Tyga

Friday Nights

Last Friday Night- Katy Perry
Friday- Rebecca Black

Sunday Nights

The Lazy Song- Bruno Mars
No Sleep- Wiz Khalifa

Spring Break

The Motto- Drake
Young, Wild & Free- Wiz Khalifa ft. Snoop Dog

Freshman Year

Ice Cream Paint Job- Durrough
Bedrock- Lil’ Wayne

First Job

Look At Me Now- Chris Brown
Rack City- Tyga

Shower Song

I’m Sexy and I Know It- LMFAO
Pocketful of Sunshine- Natasha Beddingfield

The ‘Pranks’ in Senior Pranks are Hard to Come By

Meredith Farrer
Knight Life News

Good pranks at Loy Norrix are hard to come by; most of them involve vandalism, which is very different than pranks. The difference between a prank and vandalism is that a prank does not harm the school in any way, doesn't cost the school anything for cleanup and does not disrupt the school day in any way.

VW Beetle - 1970s

There is the famous VW beetle on the roof of the school. However this story has been told so many times there is a variation on the location of the car. One says that the car was taken apart and put on the tower roof; there is also the story where it is on the cafeteria roof, and lastly the bridge roof.

Punishment: The NHS kids couldn't wear their stoles, and the non-NHS students could not walk.

Banned Books

Another year a few students began collecting banned books, such as "1984" and "Catcher in the Rye." They then throughout year, placed all the banned books they had collected into the library, shelved between the other book. Few noticed that the books were there and that the Dewey Decimal System had been disrupted.

Punishment: No punishment

Spray-Painted

Students spray-painted their graduating year on the C-wing doors.

Punishment: They had to clean it up

Powder Puff

A student took the blue paint used for Powderpuff football and sprayed their name and year on the sidewalk.

Punishment: The student and their family had to come clean it up

Liquid Nails - 2008

One student came to school extra early and put Liquid Nail into the classroom locks so that when the teachers arrived they would be unable to access their classrooms, luckily the liquid nails had not set, otherwise it would have cost the school thousands of dollars to replace all the locks.

Punishment: The student was suspended for 10 days.



ID Badge - 2004

In 2004 the ID badge was introduced to Loy Norrix High School. Students were troubled that they now had to wear the IDs. Two students were particularly upset. These were the kids who snuck over to Norrix at night and measured the tower. The idea was to give the tower its own ID badge. Why measure the tower? The tower ID needed to be in proportion to the IDs given to students.

Punishment: One of the students could not deliver his graduation speech

Forks on The Front Lawn

A student who worked at Burger King stole a bunch of forks and outlined the year on the front lawn.

Punishment: The student who worked at Burger King faced consequences

Cement in The Senior Courtyard - 2007

A few students from the class of '07 decided to sneak into the senior courtyard at night lugging bags of cement. Once in the courtyard they began digging a trench and mixing up the cement. They poured the cement into the trenches and left it to dry. The next day after the cement hardened was when the staff and students noticed the cement 07 in the corner of the senior courtyard.

Punishment: They were not caught

Hippo on The Tower

Another year a few students took a hippopotamus from Putters and somehow managed to put it on the roof of the tower.

Punishment: Spent the night in jail

* The Hippo was pretty cool

Destruction

Another year students trashed the guardhouse.

Punishment: Some of the students could not wear their stoles and others could not walk at graduation

Seniors Reflect on Four Years of School

Veronica Olan
Knight Life News

You're on your last day of 8th grade and a few months later you are a freshman in high school. You have many thoughts about what high school will be like. You wonder about how hard the work will be or if it will be the best four years of your life. Entering as a freshman, you are at the bottom of the food chain and you just want to hurry up to be at the top of the food chain.

When you begin high school you meet so many new people and all of your old friends are either off doing their own thing or are there with you. Things are so different because now you are in high school and you have to get serious. Then you think "I still have 4 long years to go."

Sophomores and juniors do not get as much recognition as freshman and seniors do. Sophomore year you are just in your second year of high school. You aren't really worried as much about anything because there are 2 years to go. Then you become a junior and you have one year left. You start to become a little more serious but until that final year you are just waiting.

Then, you are a senior and ready to graduate. You begin to think back from your 4 years of high school. You think of all the good and bad times you have had. Some seniors are sad to be leaving high school because it has become a comfort zone for them. Others are

very happy to be leaving and excited to start something new.

Senior Clairece Schultes expected high school to be a free atmosphere. She was expecting high school to be fun and interesting. Some things she expected high school to be like were fulfilled and some things were not. Senior year has given her time to reflect and look back on the experiences she has had at Norrix.

"High school has given me opportunities to think about a career and being in sports has made me focus," said Schultes.

Many students wish they had been more successful in not getting distracted or failing a class or even skipping school is a regret. They might have wished they did the opposite, like they wish they would have paid attention more and did the right things. Senior Canaan McClain wishes she did just this.

"I wish I hadn't skipped class," said McClain.

Canaan will be attending Ferris State University to become a neonatal nurse. After college she wants to go to Georgia. When it comes to thinking of your future plans many people know what they want to do and some do not know exactly what their plans are.

"I'm a little worried that I won't be able to get them accomplished," said Schultes.

Schultes will be attending Kellogg Community college in the fall to become a pastry chef or author. She is very excited to start a new chapter in her life and be on her own. No longer will she need to worry about the small



Meredith Farrer/Photo Illustration

Sam Caramagno sits in the senior courtyard reflecting on his sophomore year and how far he has come. This year he began purchasing and selling iPods, making a name for himself and firming up his role as teachers' pet, as well as improving his sense of style.

problems of high school but explore the variety of new things and truly having freedom with doing things on your own.

High school shares a lot of memories for

students. There is a whole new world after high school that you will experience. The memories you have will last forever and you will have many more memories to come.

Top 20 Graduating Seniors With the Highest GPA

**In Alphabetical Order*



Ayaka Abe
Kalamazoo College
Major: Biology



Kevin Bechtel
University of Michigan
Major: Undecided



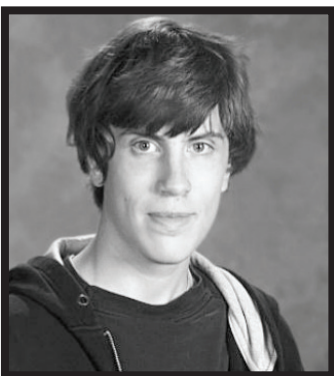
Jacob Beck
Michigan State University
Major: Undecided



Hannah Boley
University of Michigan
Major: Nursing



Mary Farner
Yale University
Major: Physics/Math/
Computer Science



Benjamin Harmsen
University of Michigan
Major: Undecided



Alyssa Hartsig
Grand Valley State University
Major: Pharmacy



Dylan Hawthorne
Michigan State University
Major: Physics



Ray Von Jones
University of Notre Dame
Major: Pre-Dental and
Psychology



Marissa Klee-Peregon
Wellesley College
Major: Visual Art and Social
Justice as Language



Racheal Koole
Michigan State University
Major: Criminal Justice



Jacob Lehman
Michigan State University
Major: Pre-Med



Polina Naumova
Michigan State University
James Madison College
Major: International Relations
and Political Science



Miki Patel
University of Michigan
Major: Engineering



Alexandra Pines
Columbia University
Major: English



Sarah Sherman
University of Michigan
Major: Photo Journalism



Jordan Swope
University of Michigan
Major: English and Drama



Ruby Tanja
Fashion Institute of
Technology
Major: Photography



Alexis Welsh
University of Michigan
Major: Spanish and
Biochemistry



Landen Woodsmith
Dartmouth College
Major: Physics and Biology

Staff Editorial

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-Knight Life Loy Norrix
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Kalamazoo, MI 49001
-Submit to Room K15
-pankoptl@kalamazoo.k12.mi.us

Guidelines:

250 words or less, must contain author's name, third period, and ID number.

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If space permits, guest columns, personal opinions, contains libel or obscenities, disrupts school environment, invades privacy of others.

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-Knight Life will publish a formal correction of any factual error made in a previous issue.

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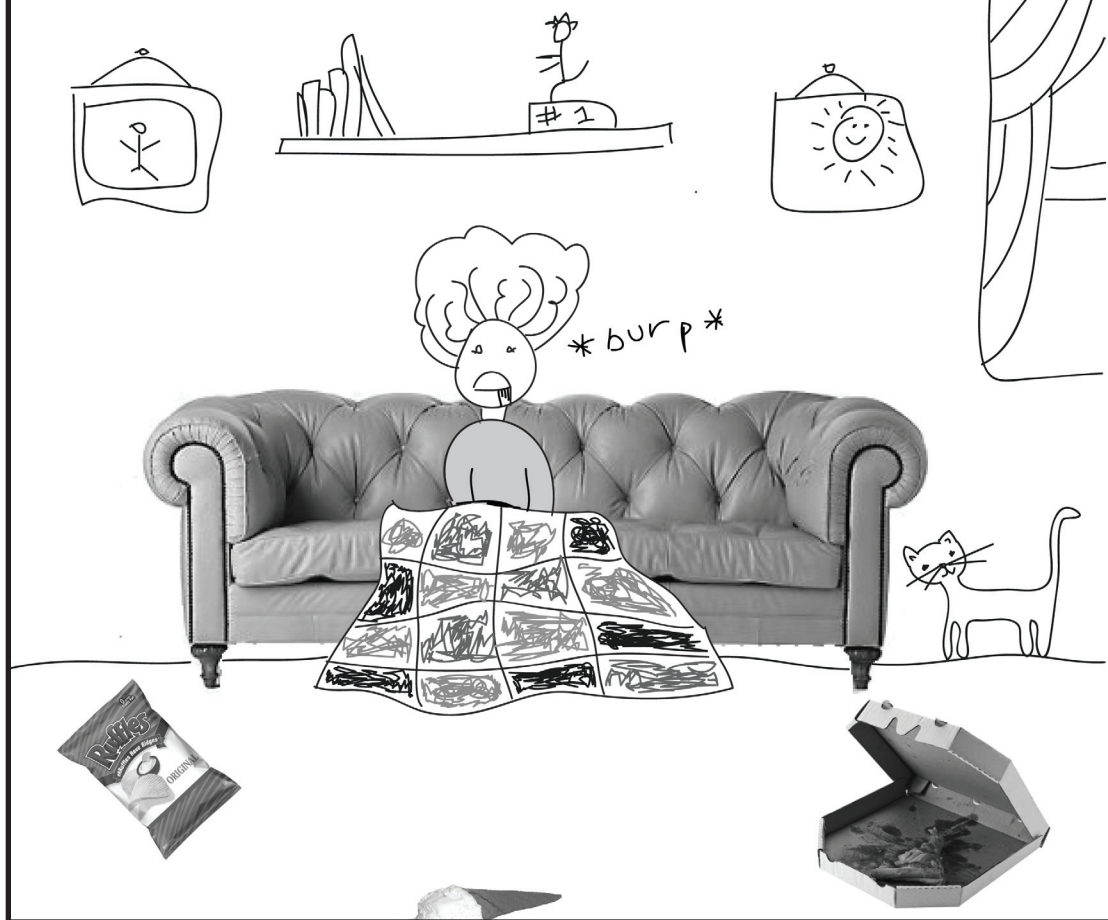
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ACADEMICALLY TALENTED STUDENTS KEEP BUSY DURING THE SUMMER



Piper Simons / Editorial Cartoon

KPS Should Provide more Enrichment Programs for Talented Students

Students in Kalamazoo Public School district that are more advanced should have the opportunity to attend summer school, either for making up credits or enrichment opportunities. These students should have to pay some reasonable cost however.

Kalamazoo Public Schools has a lot of programs that help students who need credit retrieval, such as summer school and Nova Net, but where are the programs for the students that want to get ahead in their education?

Summer classes for acceleration could get students ready for college or vocational school. It would push those who want to advance in learning to higher education. Taking college courses in the summer can also be beneficial.

"You can get more out of taking summer classes in a college setting," said behavior specialist at Loy Norrix High School, Charles Parker.

When students take college courses in high school it also gives them a chance to earn college credit.

Students who take college courses in high school are approximately more than 16 percent more likely to go to college and more than seven percent more likely to enroll in a four-year institution, according to Florida researchers.

Other than dual enrollment and advance placement classes, some students do not get the college experience that they want. Programs like Upward Bound gives students the college experience while providing students with courses that increase their opportunities to do extremely well in high school and prepare them for higher education. Students need more programs like this!

The problem we run into with creating more programs is money. The big question is where is this money going to come from. That is why students should have to pay some type of fee for classes taken. The money students pay for these programs can be put towards teachers and resources needed. Summer programs for further advancement

offered outside of the schools district's normally scheduled year are a lot more expensive, because the money is coming out of the program's pockets.

More students are starting to attend KPS. According to the District Demographics, class sizes have reached an average of 29 students per classroom. Kalamazoo Public Schools have gained more than two thousand students since the Kalamazoo Promise was announced and continues to grow. If we get those who want to get through high school faster, summer classes and programs would do just that.

"KPS should work with KVCC or WMU so advanced students can get the education they need," said Parker.

School districts should create programs like dual enrollment but for summer classes, so students who want to excel during the summer can do so.

Chocolate Companies Cover Up Realities of Child Labor



Esmer Alonzo
Knight Life News

Child labor starts with a little piece of chocolate. Chocolate companies are using kids in other countries to make their cocoa products. Cote d'Ivoire, a place in West Africa, is the biggest cocoa farm that utilizes child labor according to American.edu. Other places like Argentina, China, Colombia, India, Russia and Thailand use children for labor according to the Fox Business website.

Chocolate, the word just seems to make one's mouth water with the thought. It's a reward, an apology, your friend, but what the producers don't tell you is who exactly is making this tasty treat.

Basically everyone loves chocolate, but the majority of the public is unaware of what really goes on behind the process. To kids, chocolate is something special. There are kids that make this product and they are being taken advantage of. No one sees the horror behind making chocolate.

In 2001, many major chocolate companies agreed to sign the Harkin-Engel Protocol which is an agreement to make sure that no one buys these cocoa beans that put little kids to work. M&M/Mars and Hershey signed this agreement but still continue to be involved in this problem according to the Slave Free Chocolate website. Nestlé, however, hasn't responded to basically anything concerning this child labor issue. Although these companies have donated some money to the cause they still continue to negatively contribute to child labor.

If more people knew about the process that goes behind making chocolate would it be different? "We felt like the public ought to know about it, and we ought to take some action to try to stop it," said Iowa Senator Tom Harkin in a CNN interview. The truth is that most of the public does not even know what is going on.

The chocolate industry is a multi-million dollar corporation. They do not want to tell the public what really goes on no matter how much they express that they do. They produce quality products, but if it was not for these poor kids we would not be able to have the chocolate that we do today or it would be more expensive if the workers were treated right. Conditions that would be considered proper would consist of getting paid enough to survive, be provided with the supplies to do the work, not being beaten and being treated as people.

see CHOCOLATE page 14

Youth Voting Critical to Obama’s 2012 Success



Aubrey Butts
Knight Life News

The term “youth vote” is defined by a vote cast by a person between the ages of 18 to 29 years old. The voting age became 18 after the adoption of the twenty-sixth amendment in 1971. The first election that youth could vote in was the 1972 presidential election between Republican Richard Nixon and Democrat George McGovern. Nixon won with an overwhelming 96.7 percent of votes. The 2012 presidential election will be the first election many current Loy Norrix students will be able to vote in.

Junior Leila Al-Ousi will be eighteen by the 2012 election. “I’m excited to vote because it will give me responsibility and make me feel like an adult,” said Al-Ousi.

As support for current President Barack Obama drops (his current averages, as of April 23rd to the 29th, is just under half at 48 percent), a vote either way can swing the 2012 outcome.

The upcoming presidential election is all ready turning into a gruesome battle between President Barack Obama and Republican candidate, Mitt Romney. Youth voting is one major factor separating Romney and Obama. According to a recent Gallup survey, Obama has a 64 percent favorability when it comes to the

youth vote, over Romney’s 29 percent. English teacher, Rob Bradford believes that, in general, the conservative mindset is for the elderly, with a strong emphasis on money. “In general, the idea of conservatism is a thing for old people...and by old people, I mean people my age,” said Bradford. “Conserving certain rights, certain morals, money. Just look at trickle down economics.”

Democrats tend to emulate what the youth cares about. “Young people tend to be more socially liberal,” said Bradford.

Jones agrees that she relates more to President Obama.

“I think Obama is a lot more relatable,” said senior Ray Von Jones. “He’s someone you might see at your church, he doesn’t seem so distant. Some other politicians haven’t gone through the same things we have. He grew up middle class, he didn’t have money all his life.”

This ability to relate to the youth proved important for President Obama during his 2008 campaign. The 2008 election was a groundbreaking event. According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), the youth voter turnout was the second highest in all of American history, coming in at around 49.3 percent to 54.5 percent. The only higher turnout was in 1972, with 55.4 percent. More so, 66 percent of the youth voters in ’08 voted for Obama, becoming the largest turn out for a single presidential candidate in youth voting.

Although Obama is enjoying a larger percentage of approval among the youth, the percentage who state they will actually get out and vote is too low to be a safety net to guarantee his victory. According to the same Gallup survey about current voting trends, whereas 80 percent of other age groups (those who are 30 to 65 and up) have stated yes, they

will get out and vote, only 56 percent of youth have assured they will get out and vote.

The 2008 election was an invigorating experience, with both parties having several candidates battling it out. Several articles described the nation’s approval of President Obama as “Obama Nation.” But as his four-year term comes to an end, the excitement around the upcoming election is at a low.

“In ’08, there were hats, t-shirts, the whole nine yards and this year, I don’t see any of that,” said senior Chris Petersen.

To be able to guarantee a win in ’12, Obama needs to lock in both the support and interest of the youth. They can’t just support him, they need to go out and vote for him, as well. President Obama knows this. He has recently hit several college campuses to campaign for youth support. Such tours have been in major swing states, like Colorado and North Carolina.

The race between President Obama and Romney remains tight, both candidates remaining under 50 percent. The lead switches back and forth between Obama and Romney, currently with Obama is at 47% and Romeny is at 45%, however, according to another Gallup survey, voters believe Obama will win over Romney. The way to guarantee President Obama’s win is through the youth. The world is shifting, and it is our time to elect the state of the country we want to live in. The youth vote is imperative to this change.

“If you can get 18-22 year olds out to vote, it will make a difference,” said Bradford.

“It’s the only way to get your opinion out there,” said Peterman.

Students agree that it is their job to vote. “Our voices should be heard,” said junior Kelsee Shaffer.

KNIGHTS SPEAK

Should students that are behind on credits be required to take summer school?

Steven Malpass, Senior



“They shouldn’t be required because you can go to Y.O.U.”

Ben Miller, Freshman



“No, it’s their education.”

Tasia Heintzelman, Junior



“No, because if they truly care then they are going to take summer school.”

Madison Snyder, Junior



“I do, because they were foolish enough to make the decision to not go to class so they should have to go to summer school as a consequence.”

Nick Wagoner, Sophomore



“Yup, how else are they supposed to get [their credits] up?”

Evan Knowlton, Senior



“They should do something for credits or Nova Net.”

Students Need to Appreciate the Opportunities Given to Them



Piper Simons
Knight Life News

Imagine living in a country where education is not provided to you. You have to save every cent that you make in order to go to school. Your parents cannot pay for everything themselves, so you have to help pay for your uniform, books, tuition, food, and transportation.

Here in America, everyone has the right to public education. Public schools are paid for through tax money and bonds. Students have almost no fees to pay except for their lunch (which can be reduced or free based on financial need) and the occasional field trip.

Why is it that with so much given to

students here at Loy Norrix High School, so many of us fail to appreciate it? Not only are we given a free K-12 education, but we are given the opportunity to have our college tuition paid for. Students barely have to do anything, just simply pass their classes. Yet a large percentage of our student population fails to graduate or even show up to class.

At Loy Norrix, the number of kids who skip school in the bathroom and disrespect their teachers is astonishing. There are multiple sections of repeat classes now. For the 2010-2011 school year, only 63.06 percent of seniors at all three KPS high schools actually were eligible to graduate. It is a minor decrease from the 2009-2010 school year, yet the retention rate of students has increased.

In America, and especially Kalamazoo because of the Promise, students are so lucky to have everything they do. Yes, there are problems with the schools. I have learned in the last few months that I have to look over the problems and see, as a student, that I have to appreciate what is given to me. I will not have to worry about large student loans or a tuition bill I cannot afford, for college or my K-12 education.

Children in countries like Uganda do not have all of the opportunities that students in America do. So many of them want to learn, to better themselves. Yes, there are many differences between America and Uganda, but the point is that students in America, and even here at Loy Norrix, take their education for granted. High school students everywhere dream of having their college tuition paid for. We do not really even have to work for it, just keep a C-average in college and graduate from KPS. Most students have to earn above a 4.0 to get their tuition paid for in its entirety.

So Knights, why do we have such low graduation numbers? With everything that is provided and teachers that actually care about you, we should be thankful for everything KPS gives us. Many students would not be able to go to college if not for the Kalamazoo Promise, and maybe even some would not be able to go to school if there was not free public school for everyone.

PROPS
AND
STOPS

- PROPS

-Candlelight

Time to pass the torch

-Warm Weather

Bring out the bikinis and shorts, Ladies and Gents

-College for Seniors

Go WMU! Go MSU! Go WSU! Go College!

-Grad Bash

Live for today Plan for tomorrow, Party tonight Party tonight- Drake

-Large Graduating Class

Over 200 seniors are supposed to graduate

-End of School Year

Lets make it worth while

-Graduation

Get your caps and gowns out

-Scholarships

Money, Lots of money

-Summer

Summer sun, Summer fun

-Allergies

Take all precautions

-Lazy Students

Get it together there's only days left

-Seniors Leaving

Have fun in college

-Loitering in the Halls

Get to class!

-Dirty Floors

Where are the janitors?

-Senioritis

Just days lefts to go

-Senior Costs

It's almost over now

Letters to the Editor

Facebook Drama

Dear Editor,

I agree with leaving the drama to face-book because mainly facebook does start some drama and fights. I had friends that have gotten into fights because somebody said something on facebook and it wasn't even true. I think that facebook should just be about talking to friends and family but not recording fights and post them and talking about the fight for weeks.

Demonte Raven,
Freshman

Entertainment Sites Blocked

Dear Editor,

I think that the computers should block the games and whatever gets people's attention other than work. Its important to do papers on the computers that can raise you grade and yet people still play games. It's important to get good grades and games don't help.

Tre Cooper
Freshman,

Internet Filters are Unnecessary Evil

Dear Editor,

I read the article "Internet Filters are Unnecessary Evil"; I agree with everything you said except all students using computers inappropriately, some people don't use it inappropriately. Many people go to inappropriate websites. I think teenagers are responsible to not mess around with inappropriate websites. Computers should be used for schoolwork and research.

Deontae Grady-Foth
Freshman

Frustrations with Technology

Dear Editor,

I have just read the article "Staff and Students Experience Frustrations with Provided Technology" by Meredith Farrer. I agree completely with what she's saying. On LNTV we will try and print scripts off and the printers won't work. I've also been in there trying to finish papers and have seen the printer start to print a mass class list. I think that Meredith did a great job writing this article and expressing the issues we have.

Olivia Stier,
Freshman

Knight Life

Dear Editor,

My name is Nick Granger and I have realized that "Knight Life" paper doesn't appeal to everyone. I believe that one way for it to be better is to include more interesting topics. One idea I had was an article on the Top 40 (or so) songs chosen by Loy Norrix. You can send out a survey and everyone could write down his or her top ten. That simple! Hope you give it a try.

Nick Granger,
Freshman

Dear Editor,

There was a part in the newspaper that I really liked. I liked how you wrote the softball article. There were some quotes that really got me thinking. You guys can write really good stories. From that I want to read more of the newspaper.

Jaime Ramos,
Freshman

Locks of Love

Dear Editor,

The article, "Lots of Love Provided by Locks of Love" was written really well. I actually have a couple of friends who do the "Locks of Love" and they feel accomplished afterward I personally don't do Locks of Love. The way the article was written makes me want to consider it.

Zaria Lockett,
Freshman

Meap Scores

Dear Editor,

After reading the "Meap Scores" article I have mixed emotions. I agree that the MEAP should be made harder to achieve "proficient." A kid who answers two thirds of the questions wrong is not in my mind anywhere near proficient. On the flip side, after taking the 9th grade social studies MEAP, I had no drop in my score. I still was deemed "Advanced," so I don't see that the big fuss about lowered proficiency levels is all about

Andrew Blinkiewicz,
Freshman

Dont Judge a Book by it's Movie

Dear Editor,

I totally agree with the article "Don't Judge a Book by its Movie"! The books we read are typically altered from text to movie, but it's not always that bad! I think that Twilight's "New Moon" and "Eclipse" are pretty interesting. Not as interesting [as the book], but it's alright! The books are always better, but books occasionally carry-on and drag-on when the movies gives it excitement and flavor.

Tashanya Willis,
Freshman

Dear Editor,

I really liked the article "Don't Judge a Book by It's Movie" by Piper Simons. It's a really good article for people that love to read, and people that just sit around and wait for the movie. This article shows that the book can be, and probably better than the movie. I also think the Piper Simons' article is for all ages.

Kyron Williams,
Freshman

Friendship Through the Ages

Dear Editor,

I liked the article "Friendship Through The Ages" a lot because it reminds me of the friendship I have with Samantha Stone. We are just the cutest girls ever when we are together. We've been best friends since 8th grade. We've been through a lot. We do everything together, but we can have the funnest times while we're doing nothing. I love her <3

Cassidy Davis,
Freshman

Love Yourself Enough to Live

Dear Editor,

The article that I read was "Love Yourself Enough to Live. Suicide is Not the Answer" by Esmer Alonzo. Suicide and self esteem is a big part in the lives of teenagers, and everyone can relate to it. Bullying is a big problem in our society, and this article really teaches us the reality of it all. I loved how the article shared real life stories, statistics, and how it can be prevented. This article was very well written.

Rachel Dodge,
Freshman

CHOCOLATE from page 12

These kids make the chocolate but don't even get the privilege of tasting the product or have ever tasted it before says CNN during an interview with one of the children who works in these conditions.

According to A Fair Trade Hub, producers like Fair Trade do not exploit workers and children. They are a nonprofit organization and one of the few companies that actually help the farmers. They provide a fair price for these beans.

Nestlé and Ferrero-Rocher are involved in child labor. Nestlé produces chocolate cookies, coffee, ice cream, chilled and frozen food, and many other products. Ferrero-Rocher produces truffles and a wide variety of chocolate covered nuts and fillings.

Nestlé's motto, "Good food, Good life"... "these words represent the promise we commit to every day, everywhere-to enhance lives, throughout life, with good food and beverages." They say they are committed to "enhance lives," I do not see any enhancement in their workers' lives including both children and adult workers.

Although there are companies like Sweet Earth Chocolates, Divine Chocolate, and Equal Exchange that are actually making a great effort to stop child labor, there are major companies who still have not made the change. These are the companies that have the majority of the population in their hands. They have lots of committed buyers.

If people would stop buying chocolate that uses child labor and start buying chocolate from smaller companies like these above then the major chocolate companies would more likely change their tactics concerning their use of child labor. You can petition to stop child labor at change.org and search Ferrero-Rocher to support the cause.

Laws are in place but have not made a very major difference since children are still being put to dangerous work. In 2008 there was an estimated 215 million children working around the world. One hundred million of this total are kids under the age of 15 according to the website OneWorld. Since then this number has declined 4 percent in the last 4 years. One percent each year is not progress.

It is time that people learn the truth behind what they purchase and eat. Every time you buy a product you are voting for producers to make more of that product. Buying certain chocolate is like a vote for child labor. The world needs to see the bigger picture. If this happened in the United States it would be breaking world news.

Year End Sports Review

Men's Soccer

The men's soccer team ended the season 16-4-1 the best record in school history. Not only did the team put out the best record ever there were many individual awards.

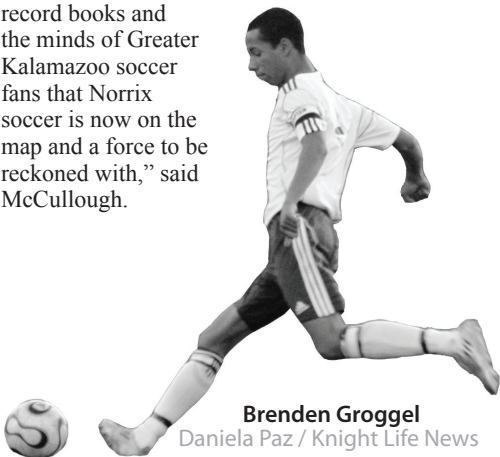
Soccer had the most all conference/all district individuals in school history. Senior Stevenson Storm and sophomore Jay McIntosh made All-State Honorable Mention. There has only been one person at Loy Norrix to receive this award. To top it all off, Loy Norrix social studies teacher and varsity soccer coach Matthew McCullough won coach of the year.

The team also beat Portage Central for the first time in twenty years and only the fourth time in school history. They ended their season in the district final to Portage Northern in overtime. This was the first time making the district final in twenty years and only the second time in history.

"If I could describe the season in a couple words it would be memorable and impressive because we have

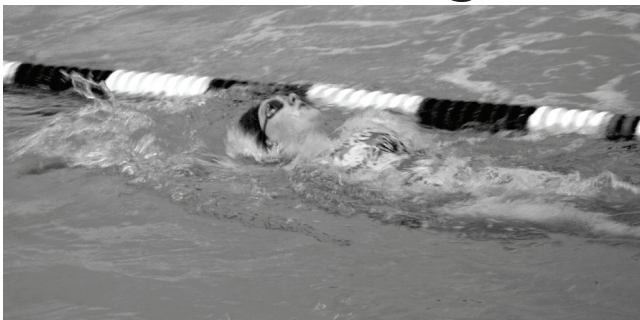
proved that our program has come along way," said senior Brenden Groggel.

"I feel like we fulfilled our motto this year better than any team in school history: "Scholar Athletes, Working Together, Organized as One. Our success was based on a full team effort that we were not going to be denied success based on others impressions of Norrix Soccer. We decided to make our own place in the record books and the minds of Greater Kalamazoo soccer fans that Norrix soccer is now on the map and a force to be reckoned with," said McCullough.



Brenden Groggel
Daniela Paz / Knight Life News

Women's Swimming & Diving



Daniela Paz / Knight Life News

Senior Elizabeth Austin is swimming the breast stroke in on of the meets. The women's swimming team beat Battle Creek Central for the first time in school history.

The women's swimming and diving team went through a rough season. Each girl dedicated her time and effort to a pool. Waking up at early hours of the day before school and working hard after school as well. Although the team has had many ups and downs through the years, the lady knights managed to make history.

Since women's competitive swimming started Loy Norrix has never beaten Battle Creek Central. This year the team not only won their first meet in six years but they beat Battle Creek Central.

"[This season was] Life changing. Seeing everyone work together as a

team to overcome obstacles to reach our goal was a time in my life where people impacted me greatly," said Sarah Townsend. " We will continue to succeed and grow together more as a team."

"[We had] excellent growth throughout the season with a first time in history win over Battle Creek Central. [There were] two divers, Jena Burkey and Katie Cox that qualified for the State Regional Diving meet. Many athletes swam themselves into the Loy Norrix swimming class top tens. [The] lady knights built experience and became competitive," said Townsend.

Women's Cheerleading

The competitive cheer team also had a historic season. The team won the SMAC Tourney for the first time in school history. The girls never finished lower than third place in all competitions. The squad also won all three SMAC competitions they participated in. The team also broke the school record for a team score.

"I would describe the season as SMAC champions because that's what we are. We proved that we are someone and we are a sport," said senior Reana Smith.

"[I would describe the season as] record breaking and irreplaceable because we broke a lot of records and we won the SMAC which our school has never done," said senior Ray'von Jones.



Leah Rathbun / Knight Life News

The Loy Norrix cheerleaders cheer at the KC basketball game. The cheer team won the SMAC title for the first time in school history.

Men's Swimming & Diving



John Walker / Guest Phototgrapher

Senior Colin Overhiser swims the 100 yard butterfly. Colin has been swimming for four years.

The men's swimming team had a growing season. Everyone dropped times meaning they got faster. This year there were new members and made huge improvements in times. The team had one of the best conference season in terms of dropped times and records being broken. Seven members made states this year. Junior Cody Gall finished 10th in the 100-yard breaststroke.

"This was a season of learning, growing and improving because we won some meets and sometimes we lost some that when we look back at it we could have done better," said senior Colin Overhiser.

"[I would describe the season as] long, hard working, and motivating because this swim season I wanted to push myself and get everyone else to so we could break records," said Gall.

Men's Lacrosse

The men's lacrosse team consists of five Loy Norrix athletes and many from Kalamazoo Central. The team does not win very much but what they take away from this sport is the family atmosphere that comes with it. First year player sophomore Reed Zapf says this is the best experience he has had with a sport. He adds that his teammates are one big happy family. First year head coach David Wilson has brought all of them closer together as a family along with teaching them the sport.

"[I would describe this season as an] adrenalin rush because it is a fast moving sport. If you're not into the game you will not do well. It is a great time no matter if we win or lose," said Zapf.

"[I would describe this season as] progressive and a new start because we are making our way to a new Kalamazoo United lacrosse team," said freshman Aaron Eshleman.



Michael Scheck / Guest Photographer

The Kalamazoo United lacrosse team includes five Loy Norrix students. They are improving everyday of the season.

Women's Tennis

The women's tennis team has had a rough season. However, tennis is not about winning it is about improving individually and as a team. This year the team has had many positive changes in regards to the line up but has been able to pull through with a solid team. Although the record shows otherwise, the lady knights battled to come out with some wins.

"This season was a struggle, but one survived by having fun with friends," said varsity coach and Loy Norrix social studies teacher Art Williams.

"This season has been really fun. Even if we lose we're still close as a team and have fun as a team. I look forward to practices, games and spending time with the team," said freshman Rachel Wheat.



Greg Dorow / Guest Photographer

The women's tennis team smile for a picture after winning the Loy Norrix invitational. The girls improved throughout the season.

Fall

Winter

Spring

Loy Norrix Freshmen Take on a Varsity Sport



Daniela Paz/Knight Life News

Freshmen Austin Thompson is up to bat. The Knights are currently 27-4 in the 2012 spring season. The season is not yet over, but they are keeping their heads up and trying to finish strong.

Daniela Paz
Knight Life News

Baseball is more than just running around a diamond and hitting homeruns, it takes a lot of skill and dedication. This year, five freshmen at Loy Norrix High School were offered the chance to be on the varsity team. Being a

freshman at a varsity level is a big deal.

Baseball is a sport that is not offered at the elementary and middle school level. The majority of students who decide to play baseball as a sport in high school have had no previous baseball experience which shows when it comes

to trying out.

When trying out, athletes are given a series of tasks to do and depending on how good or bad it is done, they are judged on a 10-point system, one being the worst and ten being the best. From there students with the most points make it on the varsity team.

Social Studies teacher and baseball coach Brian Neel has been coaching for the Loy Norrix team for 16 years. In those 16 years, only one boy has made the varsity team his freshmen year. The five freshmen including Austin Thompson, Scott May, Spencer Welsh, Jerrell Lipsey and Andrew Blinkiewicz already had some sort of baseball understanding prior to trying out for the varsity team. These freshmen obviously stood out to the coaches and showed skills that team needed.

Scott May has been playing baseball since he was four years old. May's dad, Steve, played when he was younger and passed it down to Scott and his younger brothers. Since then, May has been playing baseball on different teams. He enjoys baseball very much and because he has played for so long, trying out for the baseball team was like any other day of regular practice.

"I just went out there and did what I do best," said May. "I had one of the best base running times, so I knew I was impressing the coaches."

Although these young freshmen may have the skills to be on a varsity team, some upperclassmen underestimate their skills and don't put much trust in them. This means freshmen have to work harder to prove themselves to the

rest of the team.

"I'm a freshman and people see freshmen not as skilled as upperclassmen. We just have to prove our capabilities," said Austin Thompson. Thompson has been playing for 9 years. He started playing on a T-ball team and then moved up from there. His mom and older brother got him into playing baseball. His brother also played for Loy Norrix so Thompson was always there to support him. Apart from playing on the varsity team at Loy Norrix, he also plays on a travel team.

"The travel team gives me more experience and helps me physically and mentally," said Thompson. "It's extra practice because it's more competitive so it helps to improve my skills."

Neel believes that the freshmen work well with the other players, but when it comes to playing with other teams, the freshmen may be a little intimidated.

"They [the freshmen] interact well with the upperclassmen, sometimes I forget they are freshmen," said Neel. "The younger one do get a little intimidated by other teams just because there are some that are about four years older than them."

Although the team has had a not so great season with a 4-27 current record, once the freshmen class gets to their junior or senior year, they will have the right amount of experience to have a successful season.

"We are going through some growing pains because we are young," said Neel. "My plan is to have a better team when they [the freshmen] are seniors."

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