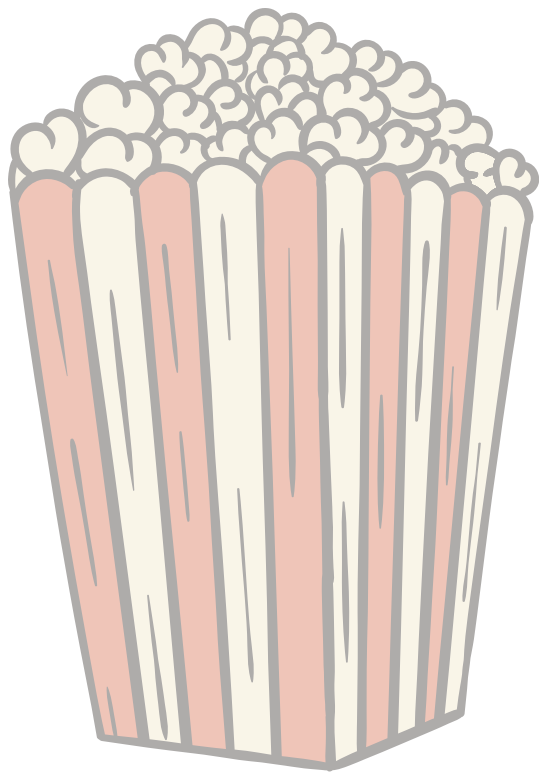


THE TRAIL TRIBUNE

Film of the Month	A Comic by Savya K	Celebrating Ramadan	Speech at NTHS
Winter Formal	St Patrick’s Day	BHM: Beyond February	Student Voice: Managing Stress
Staff Interview	Bakery Item of the Month	Yoga and Dance at NTHS	Artist Spotlight: Yvonne Q
Support Staff Interview	Breakfast of Champions	Pet of the Month	Tales from the Trail



Film of the Month

Written By: Widda N
Edited By: Elisa H

The chosen film for February is the swoon-worthy romantic comedy 13 Going on 30, directed by Gary Winick. The story follows Jenna Rink, an unpopular middle school girl who, on her thirteenth birthday, makes a wish to escape her life as an outcast for good. Miraculously, she wakes up in her thirty-year-old body, living the life she had always dreamed of. However, she soon realizes that adulthood isn’t as perfect as she once imagined. As Jenna navigates the challenges of love, friendships, and her career, she faces the trials and tribulations of growing of adulting. Will she be able to turn her life around for the better?



Image sourced from Google Images

Winter Formal

HOSTED BY NTHS KEY CLUB

Written By: Mehraal R. and Ayesha Z.
Edited By: Ms. Thiara

On January 31, 2025, Key Club hosted North Trail’s first ever winter formal event. The KeyClub team and volunteers worked vigorously over the past few months to plan and organize such an extravagant evening. There were multiple committees involved in executing the event, foods, activities and decorations to name a few. The decoration committee did an excellent job of transforming the moyis into a beautiful and elegant venue, perfect for dancing and a sophisticated event. There were stars and a moon hanging from the ceiling, fairy lights at every corner, beautiful table decorations, and balloons in all the right places. The dimmed lights and the graceful, almost hazy, photo booth area, backgrounded with curtains, streamers, stars, and lights, set the mood for a “Starry Night” themed experience. The atmosphere was incredibly distinct and very enjoyable, the night offered a variety of entertainments such as a games/casino room, a dance floor, music provided by a DJ, lounge areas to sit and converse, a picturesque area for photoshoots, snacks and foods, and drinks to refresh throughout the night. Over 180 students attended, dressed to their best in formal attire, all contributing to the event being such a buzzing success. The dance brought together the school's student community, forming core memories for both the staff and students through their experience. Through everyone’s contributions, KeyClub was able to raise over \$1000 for charities such as The Nina Project and Mary’s Meals. Overall, everyone enjoyed the Winter Formal and KeyClub did an excellent job planning and executing such a delightful event. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, attended, and was involved in North Trail’s first ever winter formal, your contributions made the biggest difference in the success of such an event.



Ms. Buick

Teacher Interview

This month, The Trail Tribune was fortunate to have the opportunity to interview one of North Trail's dedicated teachers, Ms. Buick! With a passion for teaching and mentoring students, she has played a key role in helping them explore topics related to computer science and robotics.

Born and raised in Calgary, Ms. Buick took a unique approach to her high school education, completing several of her classes online. She particularly enjoyed math and physics, which laid the foundation for her university studies, where she further explored these interests. During university, she pursued a degree in physics and discovered her passion for teaching while working as a lab teaching assistant for first-year undergraduate students. Although education was not her initial career plan, she allowed herself to pivot and explore new interests, ultimately growing into her passion for teaching. She encourages students to do the same, emphasizing that they should not feel pressured to choose a single career path too soon. Instead, she reassures them that changing directions and exploring different opportunities is completely normal, just as she did. Furthermore, she advises those interested in education or similar fields to immerse themselves in volunteer work and engage with youth in various settings to truly understand their passion.

At North Trail, Ms. Buick has played a vital role in engaging students in computer science and robotics, fostering curiosity and problem-solving skills. She shared that one of the most rewarding aspects of her career is watching students apply their knowledge, particularly through the school's robotics team. This year, the team worked exceptionally well in working towards provincials! She takes great pride in their progress and their collaborative efforts in overcoming obstacles.

Beyond teaching, Ms. Buick enjoys classical literature and strongly believes in lifelong learning. When asked to give advice to North Trail students, she encourages them to explore subjects that pique their interest, both in and out of the classroom. With her passion for education and commitment to learning, Ms. Buick continues to make a meaningful impact on the North Trail community, guiding students toward success!

Interviewed By: Adeena S.
Written By: Areej C.



Written By: Elisa H.
Edited By: Widda N.

Meet Ms. Backus

STAFF OF THE MONTH

At North Trail High School, Ms. Backus is known for their passion and commitment in creating a positive and nurturing environment for everyone around her. This individual who exemplifies her dedication as a staff member at NTHS has been part of the school since its opening.

Ms. Backus was born in the small village of Thorhild, located about an hour north of Edmonton, with a population of just 500. She describes growing up in a close community where everyone knew each other, surrounded by familiar faces. "It was a very small community, and I grew up with the same kids all through grades K-12," she recalls. Reflecting on her high school years, Ms. Backus fondly remembers that sense of closeness. "High school was amazing because the community was so small. You were with your best friends every day, and the teachers felt like neighbors," she explained. While the variety of classes wasn't as extensive as it is today, they still had subjects like shop class, home economics, typing, and band. "We only had a few options, but it was enough to explore different interests," she noted. "Typing was a big thing back then—we used typewriters! It was so different from today's computer labs."

When asked about life or study advice would you like to share with the students of North Trail Ms. Backus emphasized the importance of curiosity and trying new things. "Always ask questions and be curious. Try things you might not usually try because you never know if you'll like it until you do. Join a sports team, try intramurals, or get involved in a club. It's important to belong to something," she advised. "Being part of a community, whether it's through a club, sports team, or volunteering, helps you feel like you belong. Everyone should find their place in the school, whether it's a team, club, or activity." Additionally, when asked What is her favorite thing about North Trail, Ms. Backus shared her deep gratitude for the opportunity to be part of a new school.

Stating, "I love that it's a new school. I appreciate the atmosphere, the students, and the staff. I feel a true sense of belonging here, like I'm part of a community." The positive energy from both the students and staff is what she loves about her job. "I look forward to coming to work each day," she explained. "It's the best job ever!" Ms. Backus shared how the opportunity to work at a new school brings with it a unique excitement and challenge. "It's like making history," she reflected. "You're starting something new, creating a community that didn't exist before." Her involvement in the school's growth has been especially rewarding, as it allows her to contribute to shaping the school's culture from the very start.

Moreover, Ms. Backus values spending time with her family and engaging in hobbies that bring them joy. A love for reading is a personal favorite pastime, alongside activities like curling, fishing, playing slow-pitch, doing puzzles, and enjoying musicals. "I keep very busy, but mostly I love spending time with my family," she shared. "Whether it's going for a walk, playing cards or board games, or having Sunday dinner together, that's what gives me joy." To Ms. Backus, family is at the heart of their life. "I have four daughters, and they're all adults now," she said fondly. "Every Sunday, they all come home, and I look forward to making a big dinner." The importance of family gatherings is something they cherish deeply. "I love those moments when we can all come together—it's my favorite time of the week." Her sense of family is also reflected in her personal connection made with the community. "I think everything happens for a reason," they said. "I've met some incredible people here, and I know we'll be lifelong friends." It's clear that the bonds they've formed with colleagues have become an essential part of her experience at North Trail. "We were all brought together here for a reason, and I feel incredibly lucky to be surrounded by such amazing people."

Much room for inclusion

"No matter how different everyone is
there will always be...."

MUSHROOM FOR EVERYONE!



Including people and being
kind makes you a fungi or
fungal.

By savya

celebrating ST. PATRICK'S



Day across the world



Japan

Written By: Jennifer Z.
Edited By: Mavie M.

As a result of collaboration between the Irish Network Japan and the Embassy of Ireland, the 'I Love Ireland' festival in Tokyo, Japan has become one of the largest St. Paddy's celebrations in Asia. The two-day festival is concluded by a parade that features bagpipe players, dancers, and Irish folk music.



Argentina

The largest St. Patrick's Day celebration in South America is in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The popularity of the festival can be attributed to the fact that Argentina is home to around half a million individuals of Irish descent. St. Patrick's Day is also called 'La Noche Verde', or 'the green night' as celebrations may last until morning. After the parade, celebrators enjoy frequenting Irish pubs serving traditional food with an Argentine twist.



America

Every year, the Chicago River is dyed a vibrantly green colour on the Saturday before St. Patrick's Day. A little more than 400 meters of the river is shaded with 18 kilograms of dye. Though the exact formula is closely guarded, the dye is vegetable-based and does not pose a risk to the environment.



Montserrat

For Montserradians, St. Patrick's Day is also a day to pay homage to the unsuccessful slave uprising on March 17th, 1768. Believing their Irish slave owners would be drinking on St. Patrick's Day, the slaves initiated a rebellion that failed due to an unintentional disclosure. 9 rebels were hanged while numerous more were imprisoned. Celebrations on the island slightly larger than Airdrie consist of lively parties, pub crawls, parades, and performances.



Italy

In past years, the Colosseum in Rome has been lit with green lights on the evening of St. Paddy's. Other landmarks that have turned green as a part of Tourism Ireland's 'Going Green' campaign include Niagara Falls, Brazil's Christ the Redeemer Statue, Sydney Opera House in Australia, and the Great Wall of China. Due to the current energy crisis and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the initiative has been put on hold.



Canada

The McDonald's Shamrock Shakes are a seasonal treat available during February and March. Shamrocks, Ireland's national flower, are a variety of clovers with three leaves. Despite its name, the drink does not contain shamrock. Instead, the milkshakes are mint-flavoured and have a distinctive pale green colouring.

Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield celebrated St. Patrick's Day on the International Space Station by performing the Irish ballad 'Danny Boy'. A recording of his performance can be found on Soundcloud.

BAKERY ITEM OF THE MONTH RED VELVET Cinnamon Rolls



By Adeena

A big thank you to North Trail's very own pastry chef, Jehan for sharing this recipe with our community! This recipe is perfect for Valentine's Day or any day you want a touch of sweetness. Celebrate with these rich red velvet cinnamon rolls—a delightful fusion of cocoa and cinnamon, topped with creamy icing for the perfect treat.

Ingredients

For the dough:

- 1 cup warm milk
- 2 1/4 tsp active dry yeast (1 packet)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs (room temperature)
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter (melted)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp white vinegar
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 2 1/2–3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp red food coloring (or to desired color)

For the filling:

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tbsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter (softened)

For the icing:

- 4 oz cream cheese (softened)
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter (softened)
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1–2 tbsp milk (for consistency)

Breakfast of Champions

On behalf of North Trail we would like to say congratulations to all the students who were invited to the Breakfast of Champions! At the end of each semester, teachers invite one student to attend this breakfast because of their growth or achievement throughout their course. Good work Nighthawks!

Written by Kaelyn C.
Edited by Wilson W.



Every year, as the blessed month of Ramadan draws near, Muslims around the world await in joyous anticipation for the opportunity to observe fasting—the fourth of five foundational pillars of the Islamic faith. Muslims fast from sunrise until sunset, and spend their time strengthening their faith. This month is known to be a spiritual revival for Muslims around the world, as it is the month in which the Holy Quran was revealed.

Not all Muslims are allowed to fast. The following is a list of Muslims who cannot fast:

- Children
- The Elderly
- Pregnant Women/Nursing Women
- Travellers
- Women in their menstruation cycle
- People with health issues
- People on medication

Written by Sanaa M

For these people, fasting can become very difficult because of their circumstances. Therefore, it is prohibited to fast if it can cause direct harm to a person's health. In Islam the practice of fasting is not only a physical exercise but a spiritual one; the aim of which is the attainment of God's pleasure. If a Muslim merely observes the outward requirements of the fast, they will simply succeed in making themselves hungry and thirsty and nothing more. It teaches us to be grateful for what we have and give more to charity.

Celebrating: What to Expect at North Trail

As the crescent moon signals the start of Ramadan, North Trail High School is preparing to embrace this special month with a spirit of community and understanding. For our Muslim students, Ramadan is a time of fasting, prayer, and reflection, and our school is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment.

Get ready to see North Trail transformed! Students are working hard to adorn the hallways with vibrant Ramadan decorations. Expect to see shimmering crescent moons, twinkling stars, colorful lanterns, and festive balloons, all contributing to a warm and celebratory atmosphere. These decorations, crafted by students, will serve as a visual reminder of the significance of this holy month.

The school's weekly Jummah prayers, already a vital part of our community, will take on added significance during Ramadan. The Learning Commons will become a hub of spiritual connection, filled with students gathering for prayer and reflection. In addition, the school is planning to host special khutbas, Islamic sermons, providing opportunities for deeper understanding and discussion of Islamic teachings. Following the resounding success of last year's event, the Muslim Youth Club is diligently planning another iftar night. This community meal, where Muslims break their fast at sunset, offers a chance for students and staff from all backgrounds to come together and share in the spirit of Ramadan. The club is also working to bring in renowned sheikhs and Islamic speakers to share their knowledge and insights with the school community. This will be a great learning opportunity for all students.

Ramadan is a time for empathy and understanding. Here's how we can all contribute to a supportive environment:

- **Educate Yourself:** Take the time to learn about Ramadan. Understanding the significance of fasting, prayer, and reflection will help you appreciate the experience of your Muslim classmates. There are many reliable online resources, and you can also ask respectful questions.
- **Be Mindful:** Remember that many of your Muslim peers will be fasting from sunrise to sunset. This means they will refrain from eating and drinking during the day. Be mindful of this when eating or drinking around them.
- **Show Empathy:** Fasting can be challenging, and students may experience fatigue or tiredness. Offer words of encouragement and understanding. A simple "How are you doing?" can go a long way.
- **Respectful Curiosity:** Asking questions is a great way to learn, but be mindful of your approach. Avoid insensitive or stereotypical questions. Instead, focus on genuine curiosity and a desire to understand. For instance asking "how is fasting going for you?" versus "you cant even drink water?".
- **Participate:** Consider attending the iftar event or other Ramadan-related activities. It's a fantastic opportunity to experience the spirit of Ramadan firsthand and build bridges within our school community.



Ramadan is a time for reflection, community, and spiritual growth. Let's work together to create an inclusive and supportive environment for everyone at North Trail High School.

Written by Mehraal R.

Beyond February



**Written by
Noor and Eni**

Black History Month is a dedicated time to honor the historical struggles, rich heritage and profound contributions of Black communities. Originating in 1926 West Virginia as Negro History Week, the celebration was the brainchild of historian Carter G. Woodson, who took action against the fact that the achievements of Black people were too often overlooked or misrepresented in mainstream histories. Woodson believed that by focusing on the role of Black individuals in shaping society, not only would future generations learn to take pride in their heritage, but the whole nation would benefit from a more complete and inclusive understanding of history.

Over the decades, what began as a modest week-long observance evolved into a full month of reflection and education. In 1976, during the United States Bicentennial, President Gerald Ford officially recognized February as Black History Month, urging all Americans to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans.”

Meanwhile in Ontario, the efforts of local organizations and community leaders moved the Ontario government to declare February as Black History Month. The province’s progress was felt across the nation when Nova Scotia followed in its footsteps and in 1995, Jean Augustine, the first Black woman elected into the House of Commons, presented the motion to Parliament. It was passed unanimously. Today, this month is celebrated in the United States and Canada. Other countries choose different times to reflect on Black history, reinforcing the idea that the influence and contributions of Black people extend far beyond one national narrative.

The history of Black people settling in Canada can first be traced to the immigration of Black Loyalists in the 1780s. Former enslaved people who had fought for the British during the American Revolution fled to British colonies after the War, including thousands of people to Nova Scotia. Before then, slaves had been brought to Lower Canada through the transatlantic slave trade, but this mass arrival of free Blacks prompted a shift in the Maritimes’, and the nation’s, history. They were promised freedom and land by the British government, promises which the government cheated them out of. Despite this, the Black Loyalists settled down in the midst of bigotry and systemic oppression, founding communities and a strong heritage within the Maritimes. Black Nova Scotians would continue to pioneer social and systemic change within the nation.

The next half a century was wracked with steps forward proceeded by several steps back. The Northwest Ordinance prohibited slavery in the Northwest Territories, but it was followed by the Imperial Statute, which allowed white settlers to bring slaves into Upper Canada. Mary Postell, a free woman, was granted a court case after her Certificate of Freedom was stolen from her, only to lose the case, be returned to her capturer, and have one of her children killed. Federal legislation like the Act to Limit Slavery and the Slavery Abolition Act of 1834 gradually morphed Canada into a relatively safe haven for enslaved people across the continent.

Over the course of 50 years, tens of thousands of enslaved people found their way to Canada through the Underground Railroad. The Railroad stopped in St. Catharines, Ontario. The growing Black population in the province led to Ontario becoming another outpost for civil rights advocacy and abolitionist ideals during a time when talk over freedom and equality was beginning to gain ground. In 1851, Toronto ran the North American Convention of Coloured Freeman, a conference that hosted activists from across Canada, Britain, and America on the topic of ending slavery in the States.

The following decades would see a rise in trendsetters and community leaders who contributed to the fight for civil and social equality - from Mary Ann Shadd, who founded ‘The Provincial Freeman’ newsletter, to Viola Desmond to Leanard Braithwaite, the first Black Canadian to hold a major office - the actions of every one of these people, and of those names history doesn’t remember, built off of the foundation lain by those before them. When retelling Black history, it can be seen that Canada has historically been a leader of progress. This does not mean that the country was never in the wrong - on the contrary, slave culture and racist sentiment have been rampant throughout the country’s history. But the nation’s intentional steps towards improvement are part of what makes Canada’s cultural mosaic work, and beautifully so.

The importance of Black History Month cannot be overstated. It provides a vital space to acknowledge both the hardships and the remarkable achievements that have defined Black history—from the struggles against slavery and systemic discrimination to groundbreaking advancements in civil rights, education, arts, science, and politics. Celebrating this month reminds us that Black history is not separate from ‘Canadian history,’ but an integral thread woven into the fabric of the nation’s story.

For high school students, teachers, and parents, Black History Month serves as both an educational tool and a call to action. It encourages us to look beyond textbook narratives and explore deeper, more complex stories of resilience and innovation. The month shines a spotlight on influential figures while celebrating everyday acts of courage that have propelled communities forward. In doing so, it invites everyone to reflect on how far society has come and what still needs to be done to achieve a truly equitable future.

Within NTHS, the Afro Caribbean Association organized a month of activities and commemorations to acknowledge Black History Month. The throughline between every event was that they would put community and culture at the forefront. Whether you got served by the group of people running the popcorn sale in the first half of the month or participated in the festivities by dressing up for Culture Day, you were a part of the celebration around Black culture and beauty.

Ultimately, Black History Month is more than a commemorative period—it is a reminder that history is lived every day and that the legacies of those who fought against injustice continue to inspire change. By embracing this month as a time for learning and growth, we honor not only the remarkable achievements of the past but also empower ourselves to contribute to a more inclusive and understanding future for all.

Program *Feature:*

YOGA



Written by Jennifer Z
Edited by Irelan M

The Trail Tribune has had the opportunity to feature North Trail's unique Yoga program. We thank Ms. Garden for sharing insight into the program and help in forming this article.

Yoga is a five-credit course offered on a 15, 25, and 35 level. As with most courses, students must take Yoga 15 before moving to more advanced courses. At all levels, students develop their physical skills, work on mindfulness, and learn the historical background of yoga. The physical aspect of Yoga includes learning yoga postures under the guidance of an instructor. While yoga is often believed to be a slow and mellow activity, there is a workout portion that will make you sweat. As a result, students have expressed improved strength, flexibility and greater confidence. In yoga, the mind is just as important as the body. Likewise to how physical movement is significant to yoga, mindfulness is a also major component of the activity. Students practice mindfulness through journaling, meditation, and reflection. The academic portion of yoga consists of a study of the history of yoga along with its philosophies. Proper anatomical terminology is also studied and applied in class, likewise in the Sports Medicine program.

An advantage of taking Yoga is that having a physical break in the day allows students to refocus their thoughts and start their next class with a clear mind. Athletes in the course have noticed greater mobility and flexibility from yoga has improved their performance in sports. A feature of Yoga is that it is a movement-based class where students can reconnect with their body and mind. Yoga is a blend of physical and mental exercise whereas other classes may place heavier emphasis on the books and pencils. In order to gain the most from the course, it is essential to put in the effort and complete the work. Last semester, students in Yoga experienced and loved a sound bath guided by a guest instructor. Sound baths are a form of meditation that uses sound waves to help relieve stress and improve mood, amongst numerous other benefits. Work is being done to invite more guest instructors into the space and access studios around the city. Ms. Garden, who teaches Yoga, recommends students who are "interested in self-improvement, getting to connect with themselves and learn about themselves as people" to take the course. Individuals who need a physical break in the day from academics may also benefit from Yoga. Yoga 15 requires no previous experience and is open to everyone. We hope to see you there!

& Dance



Written by Irelan M.
Edited by Jennifer Z.

This month, the Trail Tribune has decided to feature North Trail's comprehensive five-credit Dance program.

In the Dance program, you will learn about many different styles of dance and their history. Examples are jazz, street style/hip hop, contemporary, etc. In terms of academic aspects, students have learned how to make a resume, create warm-ups for the class, do independent research on specific styles, and more. Most of our classes have been a mix of 15s, 25s, and some 35s. Having a variety of students allows Grades 11 and 12 students the chance to learn and experience how to be a leader. Anyone and everyone is welcome. Your experience in dance does not matter because a positive mindset is all you need. Through dance, we hope to grow our community much larger and be able to put on different shows and recitals. We have had the opportunity to perform student-choreographed pieces at the fine arts showcases.

Of course, we like to learn from each other but it is also important in dance to learn from a broad range of people. We have had many different guest teachers who specialize in different styles and enjoy sharing their passion. There are times when we will go to the teachers, giving us even more opportunities to learn various dance styles, such as tap and afro. While the Dance program is useful to grow your dance experience and help you learn about history all over the world, it is also incredibly important for you to keep active. Dance helps build stamina, keep you mobile, grow muscle, and make friends all while being fun.

Not only is it good for your physical health, but it also helps you mentally. This class allows you to take a break from academic-heavy classes and to turn off your brain and trust your body. It helps improve your mood, boost self-esteem, help with memory, increase endorphins, and much more.

The community we want to build in the NTHS dance program is all about love, family, and making sure everyone feels welcome.

Pet of the Month



Meet Charlie, a one-year-old Havanese-Pomeranian who loves chicken and playing ball. Charlie's favorite toy is a fluffy cat ball, and loves to sleep. This playful pup is always ready for fun!

Nighthawks *Speech* 24-25 Season



Throughout the course of this year, North Trail High School participated in a very successful Speech season. Starting all the way back in September up until January, students participated in multiple categories involving reciting poems and delivering speeches. This year was a major success as two members of the club qualified for provincials and got to perform pieces. North Trail also hosted our very first tournament for speech, where student competitors from all around the city came to have a great competition! The coaches for speech are Mrs. Thaira and Ms. Ho, who have helped students practice for competitions and improve their skills throughout the year. Without them, the speech program would not be what it is today. Thank you everyone who is a part of Speech for the amazing season. Additionally, we would like to thank Ms. Elliott and Ms. Senanayake for always volunteering to judge. Until next year; go Nighthawks!

If anyone reading this article is interested in participating in speech competitions next year, or even just wants to check out the community, we meet every Thursday at lunch in room 1424! (Mrs. Thaira's room). The categories that you can compete in include:

Persuasive Speaking

- is there any topic or issue at all that you are extremely knowledgeable about or interested in? In this category, you pick a topic or issue of your own choice, explain what it is and why it is important, and then provide some suggestions for possible further steps/solutions!

Imprompt

- This category is for anyone who is a quick thinker, and does not need preparation. A topic is given to you before the round begins, and your goal is to deliver a speech on that topic with minimal preparation. This category is great for people who debate because it's in a similar speaking style

Written By: Ayesha Z & Wilson W.

Self Authored Poetry

- If you enjoy writing poems, and sharing your experiences with others, this category is great for that. Here, individuals are able to use their creative styles to form a poem and recite it in front of different audiences.

Solo Acting/Duet Acting

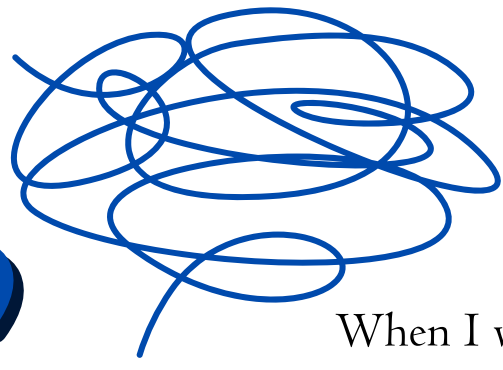
- In this category, students who enjoy recreating movie scenes or tv-show scenes can show their creative take. Props are allowed, and whether you choose to do it with a partner or alone, it's a great category for people who enjoy acting and theatrical arts.

Interpretation of poetry/pros

- Are there authors or poets you love reading? Well in this category, competitors can choose a piece from someone else and read it how they like. It's great for people who like to interpret pieces with emotion and enjoy a large range of literature.



MANAGING *Stress* Student Voice



Positive Stress

Written By: Ayesha Z.

Ever since high school, I have joined about a dozen clubs, and have been faced with a new workload of homework every, single, day. As I kept piling what seemed like impossible tasks onto myself, it got harder to create a healthy work-life balance. Initially, I thought the problem was something only I faced, but as I made new friends and realised everyone was going through this awkward time in highschool trying to find themselves, the issue became apartment. I wasn't feeling overwhelmed because I took on a million tasks, and was trying to fit in, it was because I didn't know how to actually deal with the core issue; stress. Last year, I even wrote an entire speech on feeling stressed, but never focused on healthy ways to cope with it. As unbelievable as it may seem, there is both positive stress called eustress and negative stress called distress. At first, it was impossible to tell the difference between the two, and this unhealthy lifestyle began impacting my school work, and mental health. So today, if you're reading this part of the article, I would like to share with you how I dealt with stress, and the resources that helped me.

Although people often associate school as a place where you only get homework, and learn boring things, a huge way I coped with stress was through school. You see, school isn't just about the work, extremely long lectures, and trail time, but it's about the community. Social support includes friends, family and teachers. Just opening up to someone about your workload is a great way to deal with feeling overstimulated. A lot of times, just knowing you aren't alone is a way to feel less weighed down constantly. Other people also have different experiences and know ways to cope with their stress, or distract themselves to create that balance we often forget to leave room for. Being open to conversation and allowing yourself to share is so vital in dealing with stress. I'm appreciative of all the supportive people I've gotten a chance to connect with because getting feedback and help from others is something that has allowed me to cope with feeling stressed. It's important to realise not everyone feels stress the same ways, or for the same reasons. Earlier I mentioned eustress which is positive stress. This is generally caused by trying out a new activity, like joining a new club at school. I felt this stress many times when I initially joined clubs at North Trail because everyone was so new to me. But sometimes, just participating in something you find interesting, no matter how scary, can introduce you to new people and help deal with stress. I even met my best friends by allowing myself to join these foreign clubs.

Overall, social support was a stress-coping strategy that really helped me, and I hope you learned something from my experience. I want to remind you again, everyone feels stress, and no matter how isolated you feel, talking to someone is a great way to lift that heavy load from your shoulders. Family and friends can provide comfort and support more than you know. And remember, stress isn't a one size fits all solution, so what worked for me, may not work for you too, so I encourage you to read through the other ways students manage their stress in this article. Good luck fellow students, and I hope you find ways to win against our mutual enemy, stress.

Surface Tension

Written By: Wilson W.

When I was very little, my mother would tell me that stress is like a glass of water filled to the brim. "That nervous feeling in your stomach, not knowing how much more water it would take for the entire thing to overflow, that's what stress is like." Now that I'm in high school, I often feel like my own surface tension is always about to break, just a few more droplets until I overflow. For me, managing stress means first knowing the dimensions of your glass, knowing your limits

What works for you, what doesn't, and how you can manage that. Everybody handles stress differently. For me, organizing my life with schedules and calendars takes away from my anxiety of not knowing how to approach a large project, cutting it into daily steps and to-do lists that I can easily stay on top of. It takes years of trial and error, trying different methods to gauge and become cognizant of what works for you, but to manage your stress first means understanding yourself. Everyone's glass is different, no two are able to hold the same amount of water and in the same way.

In our school community, academics and social aspects are constantly causing stress in our nighthawks. The problem is, people seem to assume that everyone should be able to handle the same amounts and kind of stress, coping and managing it all in the same way. People often blame themselves unnecessarily for being unable to keep up, when the real issue is in the methods they use to manage their stress and succeed that simply aren't working for them. Whereas someone could find meditation to be incredibly useful for them, another person would benefit best from something else entirely. What we need as a community is to accept that tolerance to stress and the best ways of managing it differ from individual to individual! To do this, we need to become more aware of ourselves. Ask yourself: what is stressing me in my life? What can I specifically do about it? Once you understand how your stress is impacting you and how you as a unique individual respond to it, you can then best look at the personalized ways for you to effectively manage it. To understand your own surface tension, you need to first look at your glass.

The World's Best Worst Amplifier

Written By Charan R.

Edited by Wilson W.

I don't know a single person, student, or mentor in my life who hasn't felt stress. Stress is a universal constant just like other feelings such as anger, happiness, or boredom. Even if it may not look like it, every Nighthawk and person you know has suffered from stress. Personally, I've suffered stress from my social life, specifically regarding my habits and behaviour. I stress over the things I suck at, because I'm scared that people will undervalue me for it; and even the things I'm good at, because I'm scared of letting others down. The truth is, there is no cure to stress. Stress is something you're going to feel now, and it's something that you're going to feel tomorrow, and the day after that, and that, and so on. Stress is your body and brain telling you that you're working against something too hard. It is a sign that you're taking things seriously, which is good. However, nobody likes to feel stress. It is the world's best worst amplifier, and there is, again, no universal cure. But, we can help with it.

The best possible method to deal with stress is communication. Since everyone has felt stress, it is a constant ache that people will have different responses for. We all know that one kid who pretends like nothing's wrong, or the other guy that exaggerates everything. If you talk to someone about your stress, you will not be judged. You will be welcomed. Family members, teachers, and friends are reliable and available sources for such communication. When I was stressed over my PAT's, I talked to my parents. When my Mother was stressed about work, she talked to me. I learned through honest and open communication with people that you trust that people love connecting over the things they suffer under. If you're stressed, your Mother would probably want to know. If your Mother's stressed, then you'd probably want to know, too. Ask yourself the next time you feel stress; if someone who I loved was going through the same thing and asked me for some help, what would I do for them? Then, apply the reverse. Thank me later.

Artist Spotlight: Yvonne Q



Subject looking into a mirror which has reflections of younger versions of them to depict internal pressures and expectations.
