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Teens place higher value on cell phones

Haley Berry
News Editor

When the word addiction is spoken, there is one form of addiction that automatically fits that description in the minds of most: substance abuse. Although today's society is plagued with cravings to drugs and alcohol, there is an addiction dominating today's society and teens in particular that is not often addressed. This addiction is not just simply a fascination with technology but a cannot-put-down attitude when using cell phones specifically.

According to a recent survey taken of GCHS students using the new setting called screen time on cell phones, majority of the students who participated spend a minimum of five hours per day on their cell phone. Approximately 30 percent of students spend 30-40 hours on their cell phone per week.

According to sophomore Kyle Chapman's screen time, he spends an average of thirty-nine hours per week on his cell phone. The major-

ity of this time is spent on YouTube watching videos.

A 2017 study published in the Journal Child Development compared teens from the '70s, '80s and '90s. This survey shows that today's teens are taking longer to engage in the pleasures of face-to-face communication and the responsibilities of adulthood because of their addiction to their cell phone.

Most teens would prefer cell-phone time over physically hanging with friends or going out to get a job.

While cell-phone use is not always detrimental and is essential in everyday life, it can alter the lifestyle and mindset of teens in today's society.

Chapman claims that his cell phone helps him study but also often keeps him off task or even from going outside.

"I procrastinate with it and choose it over being productive and doing schoolwork at times," Chapman said.

"The author of this study ... found that [the slowing of teen development] was primarily because of this cellphone and tablet engagement," clinical psychologist Dr. Sanam

Hafeez said. "Being on social media; Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat etc., children don't feel the need to leave their home."

Out of one-hundred and sixty-eight hours in a week, senior Rebekah Stringfellow spends approximately eighty hours of those hours on her cell phone.

Recently Stringfellow decided to delete all of her social media accounts because of the constant distraction she was allowing it to cause to her everyday production.

"Before I deleted social media, it definitely kept me from doing a lot because I was constantly looking at my phone on social media," Stringfellow said. "Being without it (keep in mind it's only been one day) I've just seen there's so much more to life than having a phone all in my face."

"When they're disconnected from you or others in favor of the phone, this impacts development. It's isolation and disconnection. This impacts interpersonal relationships and social skills. If you notice you're speaking to your child and they

aren't looking up or connecting, this is a sign," Hafeez said.

Business teacher Ellen Strahan sees a decrease in students' desire to learn because their cell-phones take top priority.

"These kids have no desire to learn because they are so caught up in their phones," Strahan said.

According to English teacher Jamey Wachsmann, students in the classroom who cannot put down their cell-phones are not only affecting their own grades but are also being a disruptance to their peer's learning environment.

"They just can't seem to put it down," Wachsmann said. "It's like they think they will miss something if they aren't constantly on it."

Chapman believes that the key to overcoming cell phone addiction is knowing when to put it down and having the ability to do so.

Once students learn the valuable concept that they have the power to control this addiction, they will be more concentrated and more productive in their schoolwork and in every aspect of life.

Scott, Sosa STAR student, teacher recognition



photo/Isaac Burns

Caleb Scott and Jeanine Sosa

Isaac Burns
Sports Editor

This year, senior Caleb Scott will be representing the senior class as well as George County High School at the Student-Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program banquet in Jackson. The student that is chosen annually is named the "STAR Student."

"I was in lunch," Scott said. "Mr. Whitney called me over there. He said, 'Do you know what STAR Student is?' I said, 'Yes I do.' Scott said, 'Do you think you could be in the running for that?' I said, 'It's possible' and he said, 'It looks like you're the man.'"

Scott described that the feeling that overwhelmed him at that moment was excitement and honor.

Star student is chosen from the students with the highest ACT scores. Of these students, the one with the highest unweighted GPA becomes the STAR student. Scott currently has a 33 on his ACT, but his unweighted GPA is not public knowledge.

Scott said that making the 33 was an exciting moment because he had made a 30 then went down to a 28 then went to a 29 before "miraculously" making the 33.

Scott explained that he believes he achieved such a high score because he took an ACT prep class during his junior year.

Scott was asked to choose a teacher that has impacted his life to represent him. Scott in return chose Spanish teacher Jeanine Sosa.

"He asked me if I would do him the honor," Sosa said. "I was so honored. I was very surprised because I've been teaching 20 years, and I've never been asked before. Usually, elective teachers aren't the ones that get picked. Obviously, they go for the higher maths, sciences or Englishes, and I was just really really shocked and surprised."

Scott describes that Sosa was his favorite teacher for the first two years of beginning high school.

Scott had been home schooled until the 9th grade, so fitting into a public school was a challenging experience.

Sosa believes that Scott chose her to represent him because of her attempts to help him adjust to being in a public school.

"I taught him his first semester here," Sosa said. "When he came to the high school, it was a very big adjustment for him: learning how

to deal in public school. Maybe we bonded then. I listened to him and encouraged him to think and I think that maybe that had something to do with [him choosing me.]"

Because Scott was home schooled, he feels he had more of an advantage instead of the stereotype that home schooled students are at a disadvantage in their academic careers.

"[Being home schooled] wasn't really a struggle for me because my mom was a certified teacher up to about the seventh or eighth grade," Scott said. "I was tested to be in honors classes and the woman over it decided that she was only going to administer half of the test, so that's why I couldn't get honors classes my freshman year."

Despite the struggles of adjusting to high school and not being placed in honors classes, Scott overcame these obstacles and rose to become the 2018-2019 GCHS STAR Student.

Scott now has the choice to go with Sosa to Jackson for a STAR Student banquet with students from other schools.

Scott's future plans are to go to Mississippi State University on an ACT scholarship. He plans to major in Chemical Engineering.

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Counselors to begin 2019-2020 class scheduling

Anna Persons
Opinions Editor

As the school year rolls into the spring semester, current freshmen, sophomores and juniors will be required to choose their classes for the 2019-2020 school year. It should also be noted that upcoming seniors

will have priority in scheduling. Current freshmen and sophomores will turn in their class schedules by March 1, and current juniors will turn their schedules in by March 6. These must be turned in. There has not been any change with the scheduling process according to Counselor Debbie West-Terry. Students will be called alpha-

betically and by grade level to meet with their counselors until March 1. During this period, students will receive copies of their transcripts and credit checks from classes already taken. Career Academy Night will be held Feb. 28. Freshmen are highly encouraged to attend because they are required to choose one of the

three academies this year. At this event, each of the academies will be explained. Those academies are CAAB (Culinary, Agriculture, Arts, and Business), HHS (Humanities and Human Services), and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Students should also be making their schedule based on the credits

they need to graduate based on the 28 credit system in place. To graduate, four English, mathematics, science and history credits are needed; a half credit for PE, a half credit for health, one credit for computer technology, one credit for fine arts and nine elective credits are required. Students must also pass all four of their state tests.



photo courtesy Lynn Fairley

DYW Brunch- sitting: Kamdyn Fairley, Raely Langston and Olivia Wachsmann; middle row: Laural Fortenberry, Holly Steede, Kaitlyn Cook, Laney Kate Hulbert, Lexi Green, Phoebe Tevis, Anna Leigh O'Brien, Haley Dunnam, Abi Hubbard, Emylee Fairley, Kya Banks; top row: 2019 DYW Mia Parker, Pope, McKissick, Welford, Howell, Wade, Jenkins, Davis, Sistrunk, Holland and Schultz

George County DYW program set for Feb. 23

Chloe Russell
Features Editor

The 2020 Distinguished Young Women program will be held on Feb. 23 with the '70s theme of 'Stayin' Alive.' There are a total of 11 juniors participating in the competition this year.

The participants include juniors Peri Davis, Samantha Holland, Serena Howell, Ashley Jenkins, Caitlyn McKissick, Carly Pope, Breanna Smoak, Kayla Sistrunk, Presleigh Schultz, Brooke Welford and Morgan Wade.

The competitors will compete in the aspects of talent, fitness, Jackie Valentine memorial interview, self expression, academics and a Be Your Best Self essay. The girls have been

preparing for the competition for months beforehand.

"All of the participants have been preparing by participating in mock interviews and several hours of practices on the weekends," Smoak said.

A major part of the competition is the interview, and local Mike Wilson helps the competitors by updating the students on current events that may be asked about during the interview and self expression.

"Encore also held a posture class for the participants that will help for self expression," Smoak said.

Some contestants have been going the extra mile to prepare for the program.

"I wake up at 4:30 a.m. some days to workout and practice our fitness routine, and then after school, I go to the gym to practice my dance routine for

talent," Schultz said.

Every contestant has a 'little sister' that assists them throughout the process of preparing. A 'little sister' is a sophomore that offers support to the junior competing. The 'little sisters' must also perform a number with their 'big sisters' the night of the competition. The little sister program is a major opportunity to begin preparing for the competition the next year.

"My little sister, Raely Langston, has been so encouraging," Smoak said. "She reminds me that I can do this program, and I am a role model to her."

Schultz expresses her excitement of the future of the program. "Overall, it's been a great experience, and I'm really excited for the program," Schultz said.

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Staff Speaks

Lack of immunity spreads illness

Isaac Burns
Sports Editor

Kids in the United States of America are dying because of a decision that their parents' made. These deaths could have been prevented if only the parents would have vaccinated their children.

These children should have been given equal opportunities to live just as other children are, but their parents have easily taken away their right to healthy lives.

With today's modern medicine, these children could have been spared from diseases like measles, influenza, and many more, but due to the actions of their parents when they could have been spared, they faced the consequences.

The measles virus was eliminated in the United States in 2000, but

now the disease has come back because of the lack of vaccinations, so now not only are the children of the parents that choose not to vaccinate their children are at stake. Now, every child in the United States and worldwide is at risk of getting the grievous disease: Measles.

It is understandable that some parents do not vaccinate their children because of religious beliefs, personal reasons, and philosophical reasons; but there is a line that separates these "reasons" from giving every child the same opportunities to live. Parents should not be able to decide if their children get vaccinated or not. Every child should be vaccinated in order to protect themselves and the whole country, as well as others.

Every child deserves the right to live a long happy life full of joy and happiness, and by not vaccinating them, parents are taking away that

unalienable right.

In "The Declaration of Independence," the document our country is founded on, the text states that everyone has the right to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

The parents of these unvaccinated children are not just hurting their children, but also the children that are already vaccinated. These parents are going against the belief that our country was founded on.

If one chooses not to vaccinate their child, not only are they putting the entire country, as well as others at risk. Not only are they putting their child at risk, they are violating the core belief that our nation was founded on. No one should have this amount of power to destroy countless people's lives.

We did not get rid of these diseases for them only to come back and haunt a new generation of children.

Women face same judgement from opposing ideals

Haley Berry
News Editor

In a society plagued by the cries of equality for every race and gender, two age-old movements continue to collide with one another.

Dating back to the '60s, the Motherhood Movement and Feminism Movement are still at opposition.

With the rise of feminism growing rapidly each year, motherhood is illuminated, posing the belief that women must take a stance on which side they stand: motherhood or feminism.

Radical feminist Shulamith Firestone articulated motherhood starkly in her argument that women can never truly be free of patriarchy until they are freed from the yoke of reproduction.

According to Judith Stadtman Tucker, Editor of The Mothers Movement Online, American mothers and fathers have come to believe that life would be easier if second wave feminists never muddied the waters with their big ideas about economic independence for women.

After years of gaining a voice in politics and a position in the workforce, this statement is a stab at the modern-age women of America.

While early women believed in either motherhood or feminism, a new era must be proposed.

Women in America must learn to take on the task of both and not let a generation die in an effort to prove a point to the world.

Mothering should not be seen as a yoke of bondage but rather a beautiful process of life that is gifted to females.

Raising a child and gaining a place in the workforce is achievable for the women of today. It is possible to take joy in mothering a child and participate in feminism moderately.

As women, we must be proud of accomplishments in the workforce while also praising the art of motherhood. They can both be accomplished in one lifetime.

Anger leads to health problems

Anna Persons
Opinions Editor

In the 21st century, the world is more connected than it has ever been. People are closer to their loved ones and not-so-loved ones. This is a gift and also a curse.

Humans are flawed, and one of our flaws is holding onto things that do not matter. We save screenshots of conversations that get our blood boiling. We constantly bring up the past, even though it changes nothing about the current situation.

Some people can be so focused on their own feelings, that they hurt the ones they care about the most. In other cases, people hold a grudge on the behalf of others with the belief they are helping their loved one, and the same result occurs.

On the internet, arguments are

fought over television shows, celebrities and other forms of entertainment, that usually do not even exist. A good portion of people enjoy drama and being angry.

The best thing to do is the one thing humans have struggled with since the beginning of time: get over it. This statement is a prime candidate for situations that are "easier said than done."

Problems and anger will not always be solved by that phrase, but putting more effort into letting go of anger could benefit many people in one's local area and worldwide.

According to the Better Health Channel, holding onto anger can cause insomnia, depression, increased anxiety and more.

Many people repress their anger or let it out in bursts, and this has been proven to lead to worse issues than the ones that occurred at first. Find-

ing healthy ways to relieve anger and channeling emotions positively cannot only save people's relationships with other people, but it can save numerous lives.

The world is a somewhat smaller place. In hours, we can be in another country. In seconds, we can talk to someone we have not seen in years.

In this small world, there is not much room for harboring anger and letting it fester. Humans will continue to make mistakes and anger one another with petty problems.

We see this every time we turn on the television or look at our phones. Politicians, celebrities and even rocket scientists have a limit before they become irritable.

Not every issue can be solved peacefully, but as humans, we can make more of an effort to get over things and let go before we permanently damage our relationships or ourselves.

The Student Press

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High school makes several progressive improvements

Staff Editorial

George County High School is a place of education, that takes pride in the accomplishments of its students. It is not perfect; any student could list its flaws. Despite these imperfections, the students, staff and community have grown so much in the past few years.

Students may get tired of the mantras from Principal Wade Whitney or “Whitneyisms,” but they reaffirm what we as students know. We are at school to learn and create a path for later on in life.

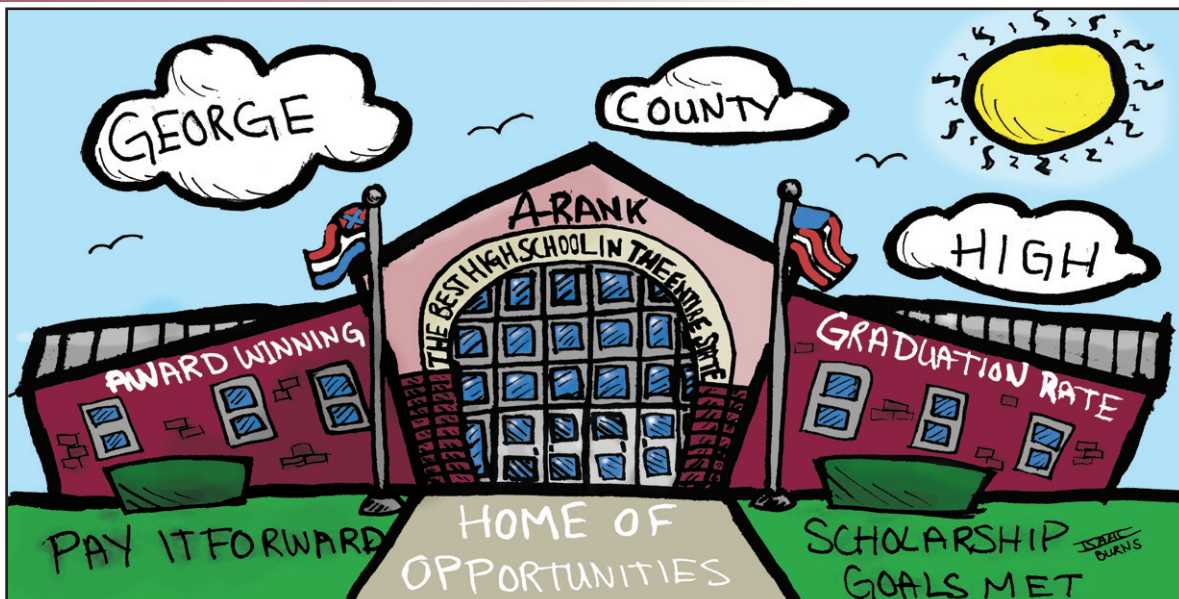
Little George County is a small dot on the map, but the opportunities at this high school are big. The high school has been deemed an A-ranked school for three years now, and the grade has been rightfully

awarded. The graduation rate has grown phenomenally. The school has programs for a wide variety of student interests.

As soon as anyone walks into the high school, they are greeted with the faces of several students that made a 30 or higher on their ACT. This was celebrated years ago, but not with this level of positivity and pride in the students. Academics is not the only area the high school succeeds in promoting.

Students in athletics or the Career Technical Education departments are supported and praised for their work. Groups like Teacher Academy or JROTC are announced when they succeed in competitions and congratulated.

Teachers are encouraged to support one another through the “Pay it Forward” award, which rewards



teachers for the good deeds they do before they pass it on. This award highlights the positive environment the staff is trying to create.

The Rebel Time block has become a tool that aids in test prep, college courses and make-up assignments for students and teachers. Once every nine weeks during this block,

students go to advisory, where they plan their high school careers and learn valuable lessons.

Every day, students hear the same things every morning and afternoon from Principal Whitney. “There is a direct correlation between your academic success and your attendance,” or “You need to have laser light fo-

cus every block, every day.” Students may groan and complain, but these are things that they need to hear.

George County High is not a perfect school. We lack in some areas, but the high school is working diligently to earn the title of “The Best High School in the Entire State of Mississippi.”

What positive thing have you seen at GCHS?

“Our sports, we have a really good basketball team.”
-Joe Weaver, 9



“My teachers make me feel at home.”
-Natalie Smith, 11



“The technology, especially the Chrome books.”
-Joshua Tanner, 12



Mississippi ignores educational needs of students

Chloe Russel
Features Editor

In 2015, a study held by the Mississippi State Department of Health showed that Mississippi has the third highest teenage pregnancy rate in the country. Mississippi also has one of the least progressive sex education programs. There is a correlation between these two facts concerning high school students.

In 2011, Mississippi passed a law that mandated that public schools

adopt a sex education policy. This law included a repealer for July 1, 2016 but in the 2016 session the Legislature voted to extend the repealer until 2021.

In this law, each district in the state of Mississippi must choose to adopt an abstinence-plus or abstinence only sex education program. George County is currently an abstinence only sex education program.

The abstinence-only curriculum only advises students to wait on sex until marriage, with very little in-

formation on contraceptives.

The House Bill 949 states, “... Teaches that abstinence from sexual activity before marriage, and fidelity within marriage, is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and related health problems. The instruction or program may include a discussion on condoms or contraceptives, but only if that discussion includes a factual presentation of the risks and failure rates of those contraceptives. In no case shall the

instruction or program include any demonstration of how condoms or other contraceptives are applied.”

These ideas listed in the House Bill 949, are unrealistic for teenagers.

Instead of being in denial of the fact of teenagers are participating in sex, adults and teachers should be giving students information to keep themselves and others safe. Not only would a proper sex education class benefit students at George County High School, it would also benefit the state as a whole.

Teenagers desire to evaluate their education

Audrey Hillman
Staff Reporter

Teachers are always grading their students, but the roles never seemed to be switched. For one day, if the teacher became the pupil and were given a grade there would be new understanding for students and their teachers.

Giving grades to students is a norm in the world of school, but rarely does the educational system get feedback on who is giving over

the knowledge. Many people would blame the student for the failing grade in a particular class, but sometimes the reason lies beneath the report card results. For that reason, teachers need to be evaluated by their students.

By students having the ability to grade teachers, it allows teachers to see their progress and be able to make their class more enjoyable for the students. The more the students are interested in the class and feel they have a say in their education, the more their grades improve. The

teachers are accountable for making an environment for students to learn, and they should know if they are successful or not.

An unbiased evaluation of teachers would not only give the student’s opinion, but it would also help the teacher improve his/her class. If an evaluation stated that a student felt like he or she could not comprehend a lesson, that could help the teacher slow down and explain things in a way the student can understand.

Evaluations could also show who is behind the student’s struggle or fail-

ure in a class. If the student is refusing to do required work and never pays attention, then the underlying problem would be revealed. But, if a teacher gets off topic too much and never truly explains information by the time of a test, the educator may have hindered their student’s education. The student who had no control is not always to blame.

The grading of teachers could benefit both sides. It would give chances for the student and teacher to work together to make the education system better for all.

Entrepreneur Scott Tindel speaks to staff

Haley Berry
News Editor

“Be able to tell your own stories and convince everyone that you are the greatest high school in the entire state of Mississippi,” entrepreneur Scott Tindel said.

On Feb. 6, Tindel, former teacher, lawyer and student to Principal Wade Whitney, shared his story and mindset with staff members.

The slogan “Grit + kindness + optimism = success” is Tindel’s leading mindset in achieving goals for his companies and businesses

“The Think Bigger monicker is a call to action, to our team members, to always think of our company, in a larger context, with a stated goal of generating one billion dollars and giving it all away. I tell our team, “we don’t need what one billion dollars can buy. We need what one billion dollars can do to change our communities,” Tindel said.

Tindel is the leader of several companies, such as Sylvia’s Biscuits and Poboys, The Fort of Colonial Mobile, Five Star Autocare, Think Bigger, and Practical U.

Throughout the course of his career, Tindel has had many obstacles, but through it all, he remained relentless with a confident mindset.

“We will all fail, but it’s about what we will do with failure,” Tindel said.

Whitney thought it was important to have Tindel come speak to the staff because of the life Tindel has led and the things he has had to overcome in order to reach his goals.

“When things go bad we can either lay down and cry about it or get up and solve it,” Tindel said.

Tindel describes life as a mound of bricks, one can either trip over them or use them to build a staircase that leads to success.

Tindel’s story is an overall motivation to others to become better leaders that are determined to accomplish their goals. According to Tindel, no matter the obstacles that are thrown in one’s path, success is still obtainable.



photo courtesy Jade Wooten

‘Tatted up’ - Senior Jade Wooten got her first tattoo as an 18th birthday present from her family. Wooten wanted a tattoo that meant a lot to her due to the permanence.

Student makes career out of passion for graphic design

Haley Berry
News Editor

What began as an interest in art and graphic design has developed into a creative passion and a way to make some extra cash for senior designer Rashun Ludgood.

“I started off doing graphic design when me and Max were trying to make a YouTube channel, and we needed someone to make designs for us, so I started making designs on an online app,” Ludgood said.

Ludgood’s first designs were created merely out of an interest that had gradually developed from a love for art and creativity.

“It started out as making designs for friends and as a hobby; now, I work for ESports Organizations, as a designer,” Ludgood said.

Ludgood’s work for ESports consists of creating advertisements for their sponsors and providing them with social media designs such

as announcements, scoreboards, and user interface.

“Sometimes I get paid for the freelance work but other times just to build my portfolio,” Ludgood said.

Ludgood explains that a good portfolio is the best thing to have in the world of design and marketing.

“My website is currently in the works so for now I use a professional portfolio website called Behance, which helps me,” Ludgood said.

Most of the contacts he receives are through social media apps such as Twitter and Instagram.

“I have gotten my name out there by designing and creating for major influencers,” Ludgood said.

While Ludgood is mainly self-taught in his trade, he has also gained tips and inspiration from watching online design communities on YouTube.

Although Ludgood is still unsure of the college he will attend, he plans to pursue a Marketing degree with a minor in Graphic Design.

Teenagers use tattoo art as form of self expression

Anna Persons
Opinions Editor

There is another form of expression that is becoming more popular than it has ever been before: tattoos. Once deemed irresponsible and threatening, tattoos are making appearances on teenagers.

Senior Jade Wooten got her first tattoo behind her ear when she turned 18 years old. She waited a few days after her birthday and chose an area of her body she could easily hide from certain family members.

Teenagers find many reasons that tattoos appeal to them.

They may enjoy the look of them, or the tattoos can have a deeper meaning that connects them to an emotional part of their lives. For senior Dakota Wells, tattoos are a part of his family’s identity. Tattoos can be a representation for how a person is feeling. Some students can feel

out of control of their lives or their emotions, so they may get tattoos in response.

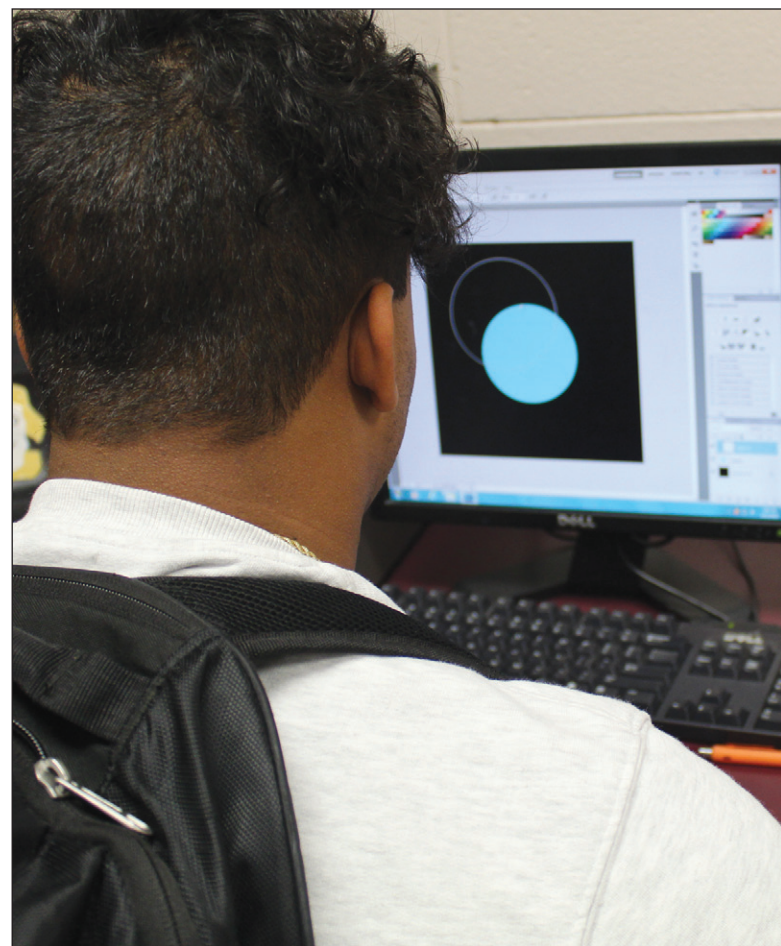
“Nothing in life stays forever,” senior Jade Wooten said, “I wanted something that me like it was going to stick around and be forever.”

Tattoos are permanent decisions, and the weight of that can hit teenagers at a later time. Regret can lead to a lot of time and money wasted.

“I regret it because it’s addictive, and I want more [tattoos].” said Wells, “Besides all of that, I love my tattoo, and I would say that they shouldn’t be taken lightly.”

Whether they are deemed good or bad, they have consequences many teens have to face either now or many years down the road.

“I was sure and in my right mind when I did it” said Wooten, “I’m glad there aren’t any rules regarding what I want to do to my body. Me getting a tattoo is not anyone’s business but my own.”



photo/ Chloe Russell

Graphic designer - Senior Rashun Ludgood uses Photoshop to make an advertisement for a new brand he is working with. Ludgood will add this advertisement to his portfolio, in hopes of landing a job in graphic design.

Snapchat streaks take over students

Isaac Burns
Sports Editor

On Snapchat, if two people snap each other everyday for a repeated number of days, a “streak” is formed. This streak is signified by the number of days it has been kept and an emoji beside the snapchatters name.

Most snapchatters send out their streaks once, twice or three times a day. It depends on the person.

Most do this by drawing the letter “S” or writing out the word “Streaks” on a picture and sending it to those they have or want to have a streak with.

The goal of a streak is to see how long the two snapchatters can keep their streak. Streaks continue to increase everyday and can even be kept for years if managed correctly.

Some believe streaks have no meaning, however, to some, streaks are more than just a number. They describe and visualize a personal bond of friendship.

“Streaks keep you close to your friends,” senior Haden Gentry said. “You talk and strengthen your bond.”

Gentry also explained that streaks can be used to meet new people as well as bring new people closer together.

“You get to know each other better,” Gentry said. “Streaks open up opportunities to meet new people and expand your friend group.”

While streaks may mean a lot to some people, there are also those who do not like streaks.

“There is no point in having streaks,” sophomore Anna Leigh O’Brien said. “You should have a streak by texting someone not by sending a picture with streaks on it.”

O’Brien states that she only has streaks because she snaps people out of a pure desire to talk to them. She personally feels that the people she has streaks with should isolate her instead of sending her snaps that other people receive.

Also, some send streaks in an attempt to increase their snapchat score.

One’s snapchat score is a running tally of one’s activity on the app.

The score is made up of snaps sent, snaps received, users added, stories sent and more.

This score can unlock trophies in the “Trophy Case” and be used as a way to compete with friends.

The trophies in snapchat are just stickers that can be placed on photos to create “snapsterpieces.”

Snapchat streaks mean different things to different people. Some students like the idea and some do not.

Most people do not remember when or why they started to form streaks. Some say they started them because everyone else was doing it. Some say they started because they wanted to increase their score.

People believe streaks have no meaning while some believe it brings people closer together.

There is no definite answer to describe where they came from or why they have become such a big deal in teen culture today. It depends on how the snapchat user sees streaks.



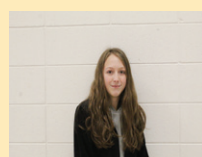
photo/ Isaac Burns

‘Smile big’ - Freshman Tia Kalasountas smiles for Snapchat streaks. “I send my streaks once a day,” Kalasountas said.

What is ghosting?



“Ghosting is being ignored unexpectedly.” - Trent Howell, 9



“Ghosting is when you quit talking to someone.” - Daphne Fairchild, 10



“When you ghost someone you leave them on read.” - Davis Nicholas, 12

Teenagers describe their interpretation of ‘talking phase’

Olivia Wachsman
Staff Reporter

With the month of February upon us and the idea of Valentine’s Day in everyone’s mind, many of us are flooded with the terms boyfriend, girlfriend and significant other, but in recent years a relatively new term has arisen: “talking.”

To most people over the age of 18, the word “talking” simply means having a conversation, but if you ask a high school student the definition varies greatly.

Many teenagers spend much of their time questioning their relationships and trying to determine what “talking” really means.

“Talking is dating without a label,” sophomore Raeli Langston said about the topic.

Perhaps the term comes from present day teens’ lack of commitment and loyalty.

With the use of social media at their fingertips, it’s no wonder “talk-

ing” is so common among teenagers. A high school student can talk to someone for hours a day without even having to crawl out from under his or her comforter. This convenience makes no-commitment relationships very common in today’s society.

Perhaps the biggest appeal of “talking”, rather than dating, however, is that teens are not faced with the burden of figuring out how to break up with someone. “Talking” has no strings attached, and if things become tedious, they simply stop talking. This is great for teenagers with the commitment level of a flea, many say.

While Langston views “talking” as a no commitment relationship, her boyfriend Jesse Gordon gave it a different definition.

“Talking is a period of growing between two people to see if they are right for each other,” Gordon said.

“Talking” allows teens to figure out if their relationship is something they want to pursue.

“Talking lets you see if you are compatible with each other,” junior Greg Ludgood said.

Many people view talking as letting your relationship develop with no pressure. It allows you to see if you want to further the relationship and eventually make it official by dating or starting a relationship

“While I was just talking to my boyfriend, I was able to get to know him and decide if I thought we were a good match for each other,” senior Robyn Moss said.

After making the change from “talking” to officially dating, many teens feel a difference in their relationship and life.

“After we officially began dating I felt a lot closer to him,” Moss said.

“Talking” can range anywhere from developing a serious relationship to texting each other all day.

Many teens agree with this simple definition of talking

“Talking is just when two people text for a long time and Facetime a lot,” sophomore Abigail Hubbard

said, regarding the question.

Talking and texting someone for long periods of time lets you get to know them better.

“When you talk to someone all the time you begin to like them,” Hubbard said. Looking from these perspectives, many teenagers might find that they are “talking” to multiple people. This can lead to misunderstandings about how the relationship is interpreted.

Someone might be under the impression that they are “talking” to a person because they have been texting a lot, but in reality they are just friends and have no interest,

Defining “talking” as just being in constant contact with someone can lead to many misconceptions.

Whether you view “talking” as a non-committal relationship, a way to find out if it’s meant to be more serious, or simply sending each other red heart emojis, most students would agree that it definitely makes Feb. 14 a lot less stressful.

Backstreet Boys releases 'DNA'

Audrey Hillman
Staff Reporter

The world renowned 20th century "boy band" has just come out of hiding with a new album after seven years of silence.

Music company RCA Records released the Backstreet Boys' new album "DNA," Jan. 25.

It is the band's ninth studio album, which consists of featured tracks written by Lauv, Andy Grammer and Stuart Crichton. The album is the first on Sony Music Entertainment since "In a World Like This," (2013) which was released independently through BMG.



photo/itunes.apple.com

The song list includes top single "Don't go Breaking my Heart," which has been on the Billboard Top 100 since its release date in May 2018.

The song "Breathe," produced by Ben Bram, is a calming slow melody that soothes the heart.

Other songs, that are not as popular, include "Chateau," "The Way it Was," "Just like you like

it" and "Ok" are all love songs or break up songs. There is no denying head singer AJ McLean still has "boy band" ego.

The second most popular song, "Chances" is a song that explains the chances if the girl and guy in the music video were to never meet. Filmed in a subway, the song is a chill yet intriguing song to listen to.

The final song "No Place," has a country vibe, and the music video includes the band members' wives and children. It explains how there is no place the band would rather be than home.

Over all, "DNA" is a great comeback album for the band. It is fair to finally say the Backstreet Boys are truly "back."

Library Spotlight



photo/goodreads.com

"This book has just enough grit without being gruesome, and the main characters have some serious attitude. "I Hunt Killers" is full of suspense but also enough snark to make you laugh as well!"

-Librarian Kim Ray

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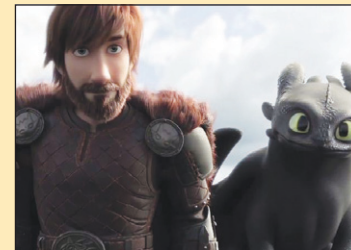
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New Releases



photo/comingsoon.net

How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World
Feb. 22



photo/IMDb.com

Tyler Perry's A Madea Family Funeral
March 1



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Teen perseveres despite condition

Chloe Russell
Features Editor

Freshman Lindee Wilson walks down the halls and greets every one of her peers with a smile. She just appears to her classmates as a normal, involved student. "I am a part of Student Council, Interact Club, Key Club and Beta Club," Wilson said. "I was also lucky enough to be chosen to be a class representative and a homecoming maid. I am also an all A student at school."

Wilson says she has always been open to talking and helping throughout her life too. "Ever since I was little, my mom said I have always wanted to be around people and very open. I have always been able to talk to anyone," she said.

Despite Wilson being seen as a normal student that she would describe as studious and hardworking, she has had to overcome many things in her life.

"I have a disease called Osteogenesis imperfecta, which is a long word that basically means I have brittle bones. The collagen in my bones doesn't work like most people's does so I have to be very careful," Wilson said. "I have titanium rods in my femurs to give them the extra support they need."

Wilson describes how Osteogenesis imperfecta affects her everyday life and her school day.

"I just have to be more aware of my surroundings. My friends and family do not treat me any differently, but they are more lenient with waiting if I can't walk as fast, as them" Wilson said.

Wilson also has to pull her backpack behind her instead of carrying it on her back like her classmates.

Wilson has had to fight this illness physically but she also has to fight it mentally too.

"Not only did I have to overcome the physical aspects of illness, I had to overcome the mental aspect of it too. I don't feel 'normal' sometimes, but then I remember that no one is normal. You have to kind of get yourself into the right mindset," Wilson said. "I have learned over time to be more positive of the situation and even joke about the situation, that is how I deal with everything."

Wilson could not face any of her struggles without the help of her parents. "My mom and dad aren't going through the illness with me physically, but they are there every step of the way," Wilson said

Wilson's parents adopted Wilson from Russia despite her disease because they believed it was God's

plan to be there for this little girl. "My mom and dad adopted me from Russia when I was baby, and they knew about my diagnosis but they were told Russian doctor's diagnosis may be faulty," Wilson said. "My parents were not able to have kids themselves, so they thought adopting me despite my problems was God's plan for them."

Her parents not only help her through her unique problems they are also there for her in everyday life. "My mom and my dad have impacted me the most because my dad is always there to give me the best advice," Wilson said. "He is always just there as a calm person to talk about anything to."

Wilson has fought her whole life at hospitals and has always been surrounded by doctors but all of this led Wilson to find the future purpose of her life.

"The most impactful moment in my life is the day I decided to go into medicine. I have a past of medical history, and I have always been around doctors. When it finally clicked that doctors help so many people and I wanted to be like them. It was the turning point for me. I realized the doctors helped me, I thought maybe, I can help people in the same way," Wilson said. "I want to give back."



photo courtesy Lindee Wilson

Family comes first - Freshman Lindee Wilson poses with her parents that have supported her through her condition through talks, doctors visit, and unconditional love.



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Organizations finish semester with new opportunities

Audrey Hillman
Staff Reporter

Beta Club

Sponsor Kelly Kramer would like to send a grateful thank you for the huge support and donations for the senior citizen tree.

Scholarship Update

According to Counselor Debbie West, the senior class has raised 1.8 million dollars in scholarships so far. Mr. Whitney has set the goal for 8 million. West advises seniors to keep sending in scholarship money and acceptance letters.

Interact Club

The Interact Club held a teacher luncheon on Feb. 14. Interact Field Day is approaching soon.

Junior Class -Prom Update

Prom Review will be Saturday, March 16 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. It is \$20 for each participant to participate. Regular admission will be \$5.00. Mandatory rehearsal for all participants will be held on March 13 during Rebel Time.

Students who are interested can collect more information from the prom review table in the student lobby. Prom for 2019 will be at the Bottling Company in Hattiesburg. The date will be April 13. The theme will be inspired by Mardi

Gras. "Let The Good Times Roll!" STEM Club

The STEM team recently participated in a competition Feb. 7. Junior Ashley Jenkins scored in the top ten percent in Math, and she earned an \$8000 scholarship. The team will be traveling to Engineering Day at Mississippi State University on March 4.

They also received another 3-D printer which will aid them in building processes. According to sponsor Brent Pierce, the team is in the process of building rockets to participate in the American Rocketry Challenge at Mississippi College.

Career Explosion

GCHS 2019 Career Explosion will be Thursday, Feb. 28 from 8:00 to 10:30 a.m. Students will be called alphabetically and by grade level, starting with seniors.

Blood Drive

If a senior wishes to earn a red cord for graduation, he or she must donate blood three time during the year. Scholarships can also be earned for giving blood. If a senior donates two times this school year, he or she must choose one more blood drive to donate to get his or her red cord.

There is also a scholarship one student can earn at the high school for giving blood. Check redcross.org for more information.

Listen out for more information regarding scholarships. The next blood drive will be announced soon before the semester ends.

JROTC

The Rebel Battalion has transitioned into their Raider season, where the cadets on the team will

compete against other schools.

The first competition will be held at D'Iberville High School on Feb. 23. Results from the meet were not available at press time.

The cadets also attended the coastal military ball, where they mingled with other students from other

JROTC programs.

2019 Yearbooks

Reflections Yearbooks are still being sold for \$70 in Room 2, or they can be ordered online at www.yearbookordercenter.com. See Leona O'Neal for more information to order and to purchase senior ads.



"Easy as 1,2,3."- The STEM team posed for a group picture after its competition on Feb. 7, where junior Ashley Jenkins was awarded an \$8000 scholarship for scoring in the top ten percent in the mathematics.

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Basketball teams compete in district tournament

Isaac Burns
Sports Editor

As the district tournament arrives, boys' coach Ron Renfroe and girls' coach Terry Bradley have their players practicing and steadily improving for the upcoming games.

"We can still advance to the playoffs by winning games in the tournament," Renfroe said.

According to Senior Chasity Street, the girls' team has been doing new drills to improve ball handling. Street believes that the team's main weakness this season has been their offence and the way they handle the ball.

However, Street feels like the girls have had a very strong defence. She believes that now all the team has to work on for next year is to keep the chemistry and momentum while working on their offence and the way they attack.

Just like the girls are preparing for the upcoming games so are the boys.

"We're trying to stay in good shape, so we don't ever get tired on the court," senior Haden Gentry said. "Those teams up there are fast and quick, and we want to be able to keep up with them."

Just like Street said, Gentry believes that the boys' team has a good chemistry about them too.

Gentry believes that the team has a good chance of going to the playoffs, however, he also feel the team has some weaknesses that they need to work on in order to be fully prepared for the tournament games.

"We could work on our press offence, slowing the ball down, making good passes, and limiting our turn overs," Gentry said. "Rebounds are a big part too."

Coach Renfroe describes the boys' team as still working and practicing hard with a superb at-

titude to get better.

The boys' team has an overall record of 9-11 right now. Gentry is leading the team in points per game with an average of 10, behind him is Senior Ron Miller with 9.9 and behind Miller is sophomore Cornelious Williams with 7.4.

Leading the team in rebounds per game is Senior Dylan Lawrence with an average of 8.3 and behind him is Williams with 5 and Gentry is behind him with 4.8.

Miller has the highest average of assists per game with 1.9 and behind him is senior Max Noblitt with 1.1.

The Rebel Basketball teams have a good chance of going to the playoffs if they win these next few games.

The boys' team defeated Greene County on Feb. 8. The result from this game for the boys was 67-41.

The results from the district tournament games were not available at press time.



photo/Olivia Wachsman

'Order in the court' - Senior Max Noblitt dribbles the ball away from the enemy basket and opposing Greene County offender in order to score a basket for the Rebels.



photo/Isaac Burns

'Ready, Set, Goal' - Freshman Noah Fayard quickly dribbles the ball down the field to score a goal against the Stone County High School defenders.

Rebel soccer closes after first round of playoffs

Chloe Russell
Features Editor

Both the Lady Rebels and the Rebels ended their season in the first round of 6A state playoffs after falling to Ocean Springs.

The Rebels overall record was 11-8-2 with a district record of 4-2. The Lady Rebels final record was 14-4-2 with a district record of 5-1.

The Lady Rebels hope to improve next season instead of staying stagnant.

"Our main goals for next season is to win a playoff game since the past two years we've lost in the first round," junior Belle Miller said.

Next season, the Lady Rebels are hoping to improve their season and grow in their skills.

"[I want] to grow and be better than the season before and continue that process during the season," sophomore Kara Wager said. "[I want] to get better everyday."

Miller also believes the team can grow for the next season so they can accomplish their goals of winning the state championship.

"We're hoping to improve offensively while still maintaining our defensive focus," Miller said.

Seniors Alexis Hodges and Drew Davis are both planning to further their academic and sports careers at Jones College in the fall.

"Honestly it's a surreal feeling that I've been given the opportunity to play at the next level. At times, I feel as if it's a dream that I'll wake up from at any moment, but I know that it's not," Davis said. "This sport as been a part of my life for 14 years; to be able to continue doing what I love while receiving a scholarship to do so is something I hold very dearly to me."

Davis hopes to offer advice and wisdom to the upcoming soccer team members.

"What I can say to younger boys and girls is that nothing will be handed to you," Davis said. "If you want to succeed, you've got to put in the time away from just normal practice to excel."

Davis also advises to never stop working hard. "Running, working out and training on a regular basis during your free time will help give you the edge over your teammates and opponents which will show on the field," Davis said.

As the season ended, Davis just wanted to thank the George County Soccer Program for the experiences it gave him.

Despite both teams losing in the first round of playoffs, both teams are optimistic for next season.

"Obviously losing in the first round was extremely disappointing, but I'm very proud of our effort in that game as well as the rest of the season," Miller said.

Nine athletes sign on National Signing Day



photos/ The Student Press

'National Signing Day' - Soccer: Drew Davis and Alexis Hodges. Coaches: Tyler Williams, Ethan Ivey, Brittain Dean. Softball: Raegan Havard and Destany Thornton. Coaches: John Rogers and Kasey McCann. Baseball: Ethan Coleman, Trevor McDonald, Logan Tanner. Coaches: Lyle Kennedy and Brandon Davis. Football: Dylan Lawrence and Dakota McCraney. Coaches: Matt Dearmon, James Ray, Brittain Dean, Blake Chancellor, Ron Renfroe, Kenneth Burns, Alonzo Lawrence, Matt Caldwell, Terry Bradley.

Garrett Charlton
Staff Reporter

On Thursday, Feb. 7, nine Rebel athletes signed off to their future colleges of their choice.

Aspiring athletes must take a large amount of consideration before choosing their future school.

According to football player Dylan Lawrence, several visits to the different schools, an evaluation of the coaches, and an extensive amount of research are just a few things these young players are required to chose the right school for them.

Football coach Matthew Caldwell expresses how scouting coaches assess potential players.

"Coaches evaluate player film and speak with counselors and teachers about a student's behavior and grades," Caldwell said. "The coaches spend a tremendous amount of time evaluating talent. They make decisions based on what their needs are and if they feel like the student is warranted then they will offer them a scholarship."

Football player Kody McCraney signed with Bellhaven and Dylan Lawrence, just moments before signing with South Alabama, received a

call from Mississippi State University offering a scholarship. Lawrence said that although USA felt more like a home to him, he chose the school that would most likely help him achieve his goals.

Baseball player Logan Tanner signed with Mississippi State University, Trevor McDonald signed with University of South Alabama and Ethan Coleman signed with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

Soccer players Drew Davis and Alexis Hodges both signed to Jones College.

Softball player Raegan Havard signed with Pearl River Community College and Dessy Thornton signed with Hinds Community College.

National Signing Day is the first day that a high school senior can sign a National Letter of Intent for a collegiate sport with a school that is a member of the United States National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

Once they sign a Letter of Intent, the recruiting process is over and no other college is allowed to recruit them.

Although these seniors are eager to see what their future athletic endeavors have in store for them, it all began with George County High School.

Sports Briefs

Audrey Hillman
Staff Reporter

Cheer

Cheerleaders for the 2019-2020 school year were recently selected.

Incoming freshman are Marley Breland, Morgan Colburn, Johnna George, Kaci Taylor and Hope Welford.

Next year's sophomores are Jacie Bounds, Ashley Havard, Katy Beth Holmes and Sadie Pierce.

Soon to be juniors are Kamdyn Fairley, Laurel Fortenberry, Marley Fryfogle, Laney Kate Hulbert, Carigan Jones and Anna Leigh O'Brien.

The next Class of 2020 senior

cheerleaders are Madison Hultz, Madison Landry, Carly Pope, Olivia Ray, Kayla Sistrunk and Stephanie Staton. The cheer manager will be Bailey Martin.

Tennis

The tennis team currently practicing on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Lucedale City Park. See Coach Pater for more details.

"It is not too late to join" Pater said. The season is is fast approaching, so join as soon as possible.

The returning senior players are Isaac Burns, Cade Caldwell and Grant Eubanks.

Powerlifting

The powerlifting team had their district meet at Gulfport High school on Jan 26. Although none of the participants qualified for the state meet, the team looks forward to improving every day for next season. Past senior was Raegan Havard, and upcoming seniors are Aspen Lofton and Lexie Rouse.

Baseball

The baseball team held its jamboree Feb. 16 against Richton High and Greene County High School. The team also played at Pascagoula on Tuesday. Results were not available at press time. The team will be

playing at Pascagoula at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Thursday. Seniors include Colby Cochran, Ethan Coleman, Austin Hillman, Trevor McDonald, Cody McDoniel, Cole Pugh and Logan Tanner.

Softball

The softball team also held its jamboree Feb.16 against Wayne County and Ocean Springs. The team will be playing in the Gulfport Classic Feb 22 at 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. The teams first regular season game will be at East Central Feb 26. Seniors include Raegan Havard and Dessy Thornton.

Track

The track team is preparing for its first meet Feb.25 at Vancleave High School. Anyone can watch live at ms.milesplit.com. Results will be posted live as they happen.

Golf

The girls team has 5 returning starters: senior Morgan Broadus, senior Shaderia Fairley, sophomore Abby Hubbard, senior Chloe Russell and sophomore Jaydn Via. Boys include junior Cy Smith, sophomore Derrick Ring and senior Taylor Warden. The teams' first tournament meets will be held on Feb 23.