

# Mustang Monitor

Volume 63, Issue 3

Evergreen Park Community  
High School

March 2018

## Cheer team goes to state competition



The Evergreen Park Community High School co-ed cheer team, led by head coach Rachael Mayo, made school history in February by going to the state competition in Bloomington for the first time.

BY AMARI BROWN

Evergreen Park's varsity co-ed cheerleading team qualified for state this year on Jan. 27, competing at Andrew High School. They were in the top five final teams to qualify for state. The team went on to perform at the Grossinger Motor Arena on Feb. 2 in Bloomington. This was the EPCHS cheer team's first state competition in the co-ed division in school history.

Cheerleader Rachel Witte said, "The moment I found out we made [state], it was the best moment of my life."

"I was overjoyed when I found out," added fellow cheerleader Cassandra Mar-

tinez. "My team is the first team to make it to state in nine years. We deserved it so much." Martinez went on to say, "We balance each other out. We are always willing to go the extra mile to help each other."

Head cheerleading coach Rachael Mayo has been coaching for a total of eleven years; this is

her eighth year at EPCHS. "They are a team who defies the odds," said Coach Mayo.

"They are a team that does not give in to the forces acting against them. They fight for every inch."

Looking back on their experience at the state competition, Martinez says, "The state experience was great. And I couldn't have asked for a better one. We all had so much fun."

### Cheer Tryouts:

**Apr. 24, 26, & 27  
7:30-9:30 pm in  
the large gym**

**Final tryout  
Apr. 28  
8 a.m.-12 p.m.**



The cheer team celebrated an exciting conclusion to a memorable season. The team arrived in Bloomington on Feb. 2 ready to make EPCHS proud.

Male and female students who are interested in joining in on the fun and success of the cheer team should mark

their calendars for Apr. 24 when tryouts begin. Come be a part of something amazing!

## NHS benefit showcases teens' talents

Aryianna Coleman captivated the audience with her vocal talent at the NHS Talent Benefit Concert, which raised over \$1000 for charity.



BY KENZIE TELSTAD

On Mar. 9 the National Honor Society (NHS), sponsored by Mr. Ben Nesler, held a Talent Benefit Show in the auditorium. There were approximately 270 tickets sold with a total of \$1150 collected! The money will

be donated to the Wounded Warrior Project and the Ronald McDonald House in Oak Lawn.

There were twenty great performances, such as Faith Kokoska and Brian Gutrich singing "Rewrite the Stars" from the musical *The Greatest Showman*, Lakaela

Prince singing "Epoch," the Dana Kahn Band performing three songs, (two of which were in Spanish, plus "More Than a Band" from Lemonade Mouth), Benas Alcauskas performing a comedy routine, along with many others, showing the audience their wonderful voices and amazing dance moves.

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# NEWS

## Students lead efforts to celebrate Black History Month

BY MYA WHITTON

The month of February is the shortest month of the year. This month is packed with events like the Winter Olympics and Valentine's Day; therefore, the prominence of Black History Month can easily be forgotten. Evergreen Park Community High School wanted to change how students view the month.

This year, a student-led Black History Month club created an awareness of black historians' legendary role impacting civil rights, racial equality and African American cultural discoveries.

Senior Honor Branch has made tremendous efforts to show school-wide what the foundation of Black History Month means to today's society. "When I first decided to talk to Principal Sanderson about Black History Month, I felt like [Black History Month] was downplayed and not celebrated enough," remarked Branch. "We should do more to involve the students in celebrating heritage and growing to bridge the cultural gap." Branch created a bulletin board featuring role models like Jesse Owens, a renowned Olympian; and Alvin Ailey, a choreographer who founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and helped multicultural dancers prosper, among others.

The Learning Resource Center created a section of

books that place the spotlight on black history firsts and the impact of African Americans' achievements. In addition, the school-wide announcements throughout the month of February introduced students to the many accomplishments of African Americans like William Henry Hastie, the first black federal judge. Junior Neema Griffin stated, "The announcements are a great addition to our school and informed students of people many might not be aware of."

**"We should do more to involve the students in celebrating heritage and growing to bridge the cultural gap."  
--Honor Branch**

The high school also held a viewing of the feature film *Hidden Figures* as part of the celebration. The 2016 movie portrays the many achievements of three African American women who worked at NASA in the '60s. Superintendent Mr. Tom O'Malley stated that he enjoyed the student-driven activities in celebration of Black History Month, including the discussions, announcements, bulletin boards and displays sharing details of prominent historical figures that have been important in African American culture. He also considers holding an assembly to celebrate cultural diversity and student examples of various cultural traditions in the near future.

February was a great month of celebration, one students and staff hope to see again.

## Fitness Center now open!



The brand new Mustang Fitness Center is now open! In addition to use by physical education classes and athletic teams, all students and staff are invited to work out from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.

## Mustangs 'round up' pages read this March

BY MYA COOPER

Reading Roundup is under way in the month of March. It's a fun challenge where students compete against the student body and faculty and staff to see how many pages can be read in a month. This challenge both celebrates and encourages reading. Prizes are given weekly and winners will be announced at the end of March.

"The challenge makes students aware of how much reading they do

in a day, week or month," explained Dr. Tina Ward, who is organizing the event. Students received an invitation to join the challenge via email; participants simply update their page total by filling out a Google Form each week. The results are posted on the television screens in the cafeteria and main entrance.

Reading Roundup has been going on for four years. In the past, it was limited to students in the reading classes. This year, how-

ever, the challenge has been expanded school wide.

Reading Roundup is one part of a widespread effort to increase student reading across the school. In addition, many English classes have incorporated daily independent reading to encourage a love of reading while also helping students to increase their reading comprehension, fluency, and stamina. Plus, the LRC has already hosted two high-interest author visits this year to foster a love of reading.

## Meet 'the next big thing': Local author takes YA world by storm



Jayla Anthony (left) and Tyra Pickett (right) met "Children of Blood and Bone" author Tomi Adeyemi on March 9.

Hinsdale native Tomi Adeyemi's debut novel, *Children of Blood and Bone*, is making waves in the publishing world in just the first week of its release. In the midst of a worldwide promotional tour for the book, whose rights have already been purchased by a major film studio, Adeyemi stopped by EPCHS on March 9 to discuss her passion for writing, her life as an author and her inspiration for her novel.

Many critics are calling the book a cross between *Black Panther* and *The Hunger Games*. *Children of Blood and Bone* is the first in a trilogy inspired by West African culture and mythology.

Adeyemi talked about how becoming a professional author has changed her life. At the age of 24, she has already had the opportunity to travel the world while promoting her book. Not only has Adeyemi acquired a huge contract with her publisher, Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, but also the rights to turn her novel into a film were recently purchased by Fox 2000 for a seven-figure sum. She appeared on national television earlier this month with an interview on ABC's *Good Morning America*. During her visit to EPCHS, even more exciting news: Her agent received a call confirming that Adeyemi will be a guest on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* soon.



Adeyemi signed books for students and staff after her captivating and inspiring talk.



Students from Block 4 English classes excitedly pose with their copies of "Children of Blood and Bone." Enjoy the book!



## Snow Dance goes glam



PHOTO: Tom Killoran Photography

Nicole Mutnansky, Tessa Foley, Kierstin Brannigan and Nyssa Wagner sparkled at Snow Dance. This year's theme was "Hollywood."

BY KATE BERMAN

The Snow Dance was held on the evening of Feb. 3. This year's theme was Hollywood. Student Government chose the theme by voting. Mr. Brian English, Student Government co-sponsor, said, "Each class gets four votes. Different themes were brought up, but ultimately, Hollywood won."

The Snow Court consisted of juniors Chaquita Weathers, Amari Brown and Haley Ortell. Ortell was crowned Snow Queen. However, no Snow King was crowned. "Lack of interest in the Snow King was the reason why no Snow King was crowned this year. Last year, only one of the three nominees attended the dance," explained Mr. English.

Students had a blast at the dance, largely due to the efforts put forth by Student Government members. "The decorations were really cool and made the room look like Hollywood," said senior Kierstin Brannigan.

Nyssa Wagner, senior, also agreed that the decorations worked really well with the theme and the glitter curtains helped. Wagner also went on to say, "This year's dance was one of my favorites."

Next year, the Snow Dance will likely remain largely the same. Student Government will help to decide any changes for next year. Any students with input or suggestions should speak to their class representatives or consider running for class office next year.

## Artwork displayed at South Suburban Festival

17 EPCHS students participated in the South Suburban Art Show, which concluded with a festival and awards presentation on Feb. 23. Paige Ocasio was named Best of School winner. Participants included: Kashara Bennett, Kierstin Brannigan, Allyn Coleman, Emily Doran, Naya Gilmore, Kathleen Jacobson, Kassandra Martinez, Marina Martinez, Dominique McBride, Sarah Meyer, Margaret Miller, Paige Ocasio, Giana Pietkiewicz, Gizelle Serna, Hope Shannon, Brianna Stoppa and Nyssa Wagner.



Kierstin Brannigan, Meg Miller, Kathleen Jacobson, Emily Doran and Kassandra Martinez represented EPCHS at the South Suburban Art Show.

## Culinary experience has French students saying 'Bon appetit!'

Students in Mr. Alan Wax's French language and culture studies program were recently treated to a novel experience. On March 1, they had an in-school field trip whereby the whole event came to their doorstep. Vincent Colombet, propriétaire of Cook au Vin as well as La Boulangerie, shared his culinary fame and secrets with the young French chefs. The menu consisted of the well-known café staple, *croque monsieur*, accompanied by a variety of beverages using *sirop de MONIN*, followed by *petits fours*, a dessert delicacy.

After watching and participating in the creation of all of these dishes and learning about the *étiquette* of the table in a private dining area, students had the opportunity to chat in French with the chef before receiving gift bags with an assortment of items

to take home to try some of the newly learned cooking skills for their families.

La Boulangerie, voted Chicago's best French-style café and bakery, is located on Belmont Ave. and Wilson Ave., adjacent to Lycée Français, Chicago's only French *baccalauréat* school. Cook au Vin is a French catering company, also offering cooking lessons by the famed chef. As well, one can also visit the La Boulangerie food truck located in downtown Chicago. Luckily, EP's French students didn't have to travel



Henry Lee and Caroline Germann take a hands-on role assisting Chef Vincent Colombet.

outside of their high school to get a taste of the finest French food Chicago has to offer.



Fresh French baguettes accompanied the finest ingredients in the interactive cooking demonstration.



French students enjoyed tasting a variety of French delicacies. They were transported to a Parisian cafe in the heart of the school cafeteria.

**PROM**

Thursday, May 17th at 7:00p.m. Chateau Del Mar  
Post Prom 12:00- 2:00a.m. aboard the Odyssey

Tickets \$140 per person

TICKET SALES  
Tuesday- Friday March 13-16th at 3:00 in Room 200  
Friday March 23rd at 12:15 in Room 200  
Must have all forms completed in order to purchase a ticket.



## Scholastic Bowl finishes in 2nd

BY BRIAN GUTRICH

The Evergreen Park Varsity Scholastic Bowl team just finished off its season with an impressive second place finish in conference. They lost the championship match in triple overtime to Argo High School in a tense contest. Leading scorers Kayla Benson and Stella Tarlin were selected for all-conference honors.

When asked how the season went, Coach Krist Enstrom had this to say: "Well, first of all, I always love Scholastic Bowl. The kids are a ton of fun, I think it's a creative outlet for intelligent kids, and I thought this year was very successful. We took second place in the conference, we brought some hard-

ware home, and we lost in triple overtime in the championship match, so we were really competitive and had a lot of fun and that's our main rule-- just to have some fun. So I think this year was as successful as ever."

The team would like to shout out the senior members of the team for their service: Benas Alcaulksas, Stella Tarlin, Cooper Nolan, Ryan Kompare and Logan Kantzler.

Now that the current season is over, the team looks to next season and hopefully a conference championship. If you are interested in joining the Evergreen Park Scholastic Bowl team, contact either Coach Enstrom or assistant coach Mr. Jim Smith.

## Mathletes ready to take UIUC



The Mathletes, coached by Ms. Maria Vinci and Mr. Jamie Pembroke, are looking forward to representing EPCHS at the state competition in Urbana-Champaign in May. The Algebra 2 team (pictured above) consists of Hannah Rahm, Kayla Benson, Brooke Scanlon, CJ Kompare, Lindsay Measner and Isabella Villamil. In addition, Kayla Benson qualified as an individual for Algebra 2 and Collin Brennan (not pictured) qualified as an individual for Geometry. Good luck at state!

## 'Joseph' show amazes audience

BY BRIAN GUTRICH

Evergreen Park Community High School closed its production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* on Feb. 25. It was a three-night production, with nearly one hundred students involved in its cast and crew. The effort to produce the show was staggering, with weeks of practice and dedication from all of the cast, crew and orchestra.

The show was the last of many seniors here at EPCHS, who will be missed greatly as they move on to the next chapter of their lives. Senior Shaina Lieske remarked, "The show was an adventure with an exhilarating final product. I'm honored to have been a backstage hand to such an amazing production."

The EPCHS theatre department is putting on *Shrek the Musical* in the summer at their Spotlight on 99th theatre camp. The theatre department would like to thank all those who supported the show.

## New Game Club starts off strong



Why sit at home and play video games alone when you can compete against your friends without even leaving school? Check out Game Club, the newest student activity at EPCHS, to join in on the fun.

Game Club, a new club at EPCHS, is fully operational! Within weeks of its inception, the club is quickly becoming one of the most popular and widely-attended in the school.

This club is open for all types of gamers. Gamers have a chance to play *Dungeons & Dragons*, take on expert *NBA2K* players, start a *Super Smash Bros.* tournament, embarrass their friends in a *Mario Kart* race and defeat Mr. Truffa at *Injustice 2*.

Game Club meets every Thursday in the LRC. Gamers of all skill levels are invited! See Mr. Truffa, Mr. Burns or Mr. Codiamat for more information.

EPCHS proudly presents

## SCREENAGERS:

GROWING UP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Wednesday, April 25  
7:00-8:30 p.m.

## Spring Spirit Week

March 26-29

Monday: Pajama Day

Tuesday: Disney Day

Wednesday: Decade Wars  
(Srs: 90s, Jrs: 80s, Soph: 50s, Frosh: 70s)

Thursday: Mustang Pride

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Mrs. Mary Kate Mikulskis & Mr. Nick Codiamat

**Corrections from our December 2017 issue:**

**page 1:** Oliver Richmeier (not Blake Rabodzeenko) was pictured in the photo for the fall play *Fools*.

**page 6:** Ashley Hoefflerle's name was unintentionally omitted as one of the two narrators in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

**page 8:** Wrestler Jaelin Cole's name was misspelled.

The Mustang Monitor apologizes for these errors.

## Get in the Game!

Do you want to improve your grades?  
Do you need help with your homework?  
Do you have a "yellow card"?

Attend

## Lunch Tutoring

Mondays & Thursdays in the Leadership Room

## Boys bowl shows EP pride

BY DAN NOVAK

Another fantastic bowling season is coming to an end. Throughout the season, the members of the EPCHS bowling team showed their Mustang Pride.

“There were many tough times and many good times,” shared sophomore Charlie Novak. “The challenge was getting to conference for the JV team and getting to state was a challenge for the varsity team.”

This was Novak’s first year on the team. He spoke at length about getting to know the coaches and the members of his team. According

to him, the team knew how to have fun. “It was a blast,” he said. “Just socializing with the team and the bus-rides home were lots of fun.” Novak plans on joining the team again next year.

The bowling team also said goodbye to Senior Conner Suszynski. Suszynski has been described by multiple teammates as being a high energy and consistent teammate.

The varsity team did outstanding in both performance and spirit. They were unfaltering, confident bowlers who gave it their all. The JV team did well in the first part of the season and

Thomas Murphy kept all of their spirits up when times seemed dark. Murphy states, “We kept it up all the way to conference. We were proud that our scores were in the top twenties and thirties on the Individual Persons Roster.”

The team did their best to keep positive throughout the season. Charlie Novak comments, “We didn’t get a chance to go to state this year and wouldn’t have gotten this far without each other. Next year we will make it to state.”

Novak and his fellow teammates are eager for the next bowling season, where

## Girls bball sets best-ever record

BY SAMARIAH JONES-TINSLEY

The Lady Mustangs had quite a 2017-2018 season. They will go down in history as one of the best groups of girls to play together since 2004. There was a different bond with this specific set of girls that took them very far this season. Four out of the starting five girls have played together for the past four years.

The 2017-2018 Lady Mustangs will go down for having the best record ever of 25-4 this season, beating teams

they had not beaten before, such as Hillcrest, Lemont and Oak Forest to give them a conference record of 12-1, which ranked them second in conference for the second consecutive year.

Coach Scaduto says, “This was the best group of girls I’ve ever coached.” This year the girls were ranked 6th on the South Suburban Side of Chicago and after a tough loss to Argo dropped to 8th. Coach Scaduto states they are a team that will always be remembered.

Although the ladies came just short of a regional championship, that did not define their season. They placed first in a winter tournament at Chicago High School for Agricultural Science and took second in a Thanksgiving tournament at Immaculate Conception. Kacey Gardner, the team captain for three years, was very proud of her teammates and the improvements they made as the season progressed. Gardner stated the team bonding and long practices brought the team closer and she enjoyed every moment of the memorable season.

## Girls bowl makes it to regionals

BY MAKHAILA JORDAN

The Lady Mustang bowling team started the year off on a rough note. They always worked hard and made improvements with great coaching from Jason Fundukian and Mike Markowitz. Most of the ladies’ score averages increased over the season.

This year our Lady Mustang bowlers made it to regionals and took fifth place overall, with the frosh/soph squad taking first place at conference. Three of the girls made it to sectionals as individuals: freshman Kiara Smith and sophomores Katrina DelRosario and Morgan Markowitz.

The Lady Mustangs hope to advance to the state competition next season. With the roll they’re on, everything seems like it will be on track for more success next season.

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# Mustang athletes 'spring' into new season

BY MALLORY BURKE

Goodbye winter sports, hello spring sports! Spring season officially began on Feb. 27 and includes girls and boys track and field, softball, baseball and girls soccer.

## Softball

Softball tryouts concluded on Feb. 27. According to senior Kelly Farmer, the tryout process was "a two day tryout that included a variety of hitting stations, and the second day included more of the live game scenarios." Her personal goals for this season include hitting over .500 and



Kelly Farmer pitches for the Mustangs.

winning sectionals. Farmer will be playing next year for Roosevelt University as a first baseman and pitcher with senior Hailey Getz.

## Baseball

Boys baseball included some drastic changes to the program, including a heavy amount of cuts at tryouts. Sophomore Joe Ostry adds his opinion on the cuts, saying, "I think it will help the coaches focus on fewer players to better help them improve." After being asked about goals for this year, coach's son and varsity athlete Declan "Troy Bolton" Smyth lists several, including winning a state championship, which is "the ultimate goal and everyone's dream." Declan Smyth hopes to win 24 games this year in order to break the school re-



Declan Smyth scores a run.

cord for most wins in a season.

## Girls track and field

Girls track and field started training as early as January and has picked up on some indoor meets. Senior Lily Sader, 4-year varsity track and field athlete, expressed her thoughts on her team's season so far, saying that her team "has a lot of talent and potential." Sader also mentions that the first month of their season "has been full of personal records, which is a great confidence

boost." Check out their home meet on Tues. Apr. 10 at 4:30 p.m. against Oak Forest and Richards.



Taylor Jones, Grace Huneck, Lilly Gozum and Kayley Burke practice handoffs.

## Boys track and field

Parallel to the girls team, the boys track and field athletes have been working since December! Senior Dan Meza talks about the difficulties he experiences during practice: "1000 meter repeats al-



Darryn Caston and Kobe Green are on the boys track team.

ways hurt [and] 2 mile warm-ups and cool downs aren't always liked." Meza also explains that even though the team is looking small this season, the coaches are pushing them hard in order to bring

their A-game to meets. Coach Mike Strubin explains that due to numbers in talent, "it's a very realistic goal to advance our 4x100, 4x200, and 4x800 relays."

## Girls soccer

Girls soccer has also been hard at work, according to senior Nyssa Wagner, who describes her season as "intense right from the start." She adds that the team's most difficult drill so far was their 2-mile warm-up for tryouts. "Our coach is trying to have a strong team this year," Wagner adds. Check out their first home game on Tues. March 27.

## Dance team

BY DANA SANDERS

The varsity dance team has had a successful closing to their 2017-2018 season. The team had their highs and lows but gradually excelled higher throughout the end of the season. The dance team took 8th place at sectionals. Unfortunately, they did not qualify for state finals, but they felt that they had a great season in the long run. "These girls spent a lot of time with each other and have grown bonds between one another. Win or lose, we are proud of what we put on the floor," said Arieyanna Bolling, a senior dancer on the team.



The dance team captivates the crowd at a basketball game.

time performances for basketball games. "There was never a time when we performed at a basketball game that we were not cheered on! The crowd loves us!" said Dominique McBride, a senior dancer on the team. The dance team ended their season with a successful, yet emotional, Senior Night as they said goodbye to four senior varsity dancers: Arieyanna Bolling, Dominique McBride, Maritza Garcia and Dana Sanders. After a long hardworking season, the team thanks Coach Tammy Pietruszynski for all of her hardwork and dedication to the team. The senior varsity dancers want to leave the team with one last quote: "Hustle, Hit, Never Quit!"

After competitive season ended, the dance team then focused on half-

## Wrestling wraps up

BY DANIELA SALAZAR

The wrestling team had a phenomenal season, defeating many schools and winning tournaments. Although the team was successful, they had many challenges thrown their way. Not only was keeping weight difficult for some wrestlers, but also arriving

at school before dawn and departing from tournaments past dusk was a challenge. Putting aside the difficulties that were hard to overcome, the wrestlers achieved many personal highs. The season ended with a varsity record of 14-6.

Senior wrestler Manuel Cumba reflected, "Being my

last season, I take pride in how far we've come as a team, and I know the team will have faith in how far they can go for upcoming seasons." In addition to Cumba, the team also says goodbye to seniors Robert Hicks, Kal-El Witherspoon, Jaelin Cole and Ronald Fasion.

## Boys swim sees success

BY DANIELA SALAZAR

The boys swim and dive team beat personal records, defeated tough schools and underwent a few difficulties. The varsity members are very proud of this season and consider it to be their favorite and most successful so far.

Gonzalo Esparza, who has been on the swim team for

three years, says, "It was an amazing season from the start. There were a lot of great meets and invites. Great improvement since the beginning overall from everyone on the team. A lot of hard work not only in the pool but out [of the pool] as well. What really helped the season was the chemistry between the team and coaches."

Kris Symanski, varsity co-captain, placed third for 100 fly at conference, along with his co-captain, Kevin O'Toole, who placed second in the 100 meter breaststroke. The boys had an amazing time and gave it their all this season. The team is looking forward to becoming a stronger team and even more successful for next year.

## Boys basketball says goodbye to seniors

BY KALLIE SCHILLO

It was a memorable season for the boys basketball team. The players trained hard for the season and made every game count. Whether it was a win or a loss, these boys stuck together and showed

consistent sportsmanship.

The Herd made sure the stands were full every home game and enjoyed cheering on the team. Senior Kenny Rickert said, "Our season had its ups and downs, but it was a great group of guys,

and I'm glad I was a part of it."

Some other key players, including Pat Doran, Declan Smyth and Desari Tyus, ended their time on the team on a successful note. Smyth added, "This season has

been a lot of fun; I've learned a lot and am thankful for the memories and relationships I have made. I wish the best of luck to Coach Flanno and the talented sophomores and juniors as they prepare for next season to win another

conference championship!"

The juniors are looking forward to their upcoming season and will work hard without the seniors. Despite losing the exceptional seniors, the future of the basketball program looks bright.