



NPHS's spring play was comedic wrongdoings

New Prague High School's spring play was a comedy of wrong timing, wrong placings, wrong props and much more as it was "The One-Act Play That Goes Wrong." It was performed March 24 and March 25 at the high school auditorium.

Director Ben Thietje said the young actors had a great time with the play. Written in 2012, the play premiered in the United Kingdom, then premiered on Broadway in 2017. The production was a play within a play where a group of actors are trying to perform a 1920s murder mystery when Murphy's Law comes to visit. Nearly anything that can go wrong does, from misplaced props to miscues to two people playing the same character.

The cast included Leslie Otero as Annie (the company's stage manager), Lori Shea as Trevor (the company's lighting/sound operator), Mikkal Hvidsten as Chris (the director and the play's Inspector Carter), Micah Anderson as Jonathan (the play's Charles Haversham), Noah Stocker as Robert (the play's Thomas Colley Moore), Amara Prochaska as Denise (the play's Perkins), Carson Logelin as Max (the play's Cecil Haversham) and Sophia Huebner as Sandra (the play's Florence Colley Moore). The stage crew for the spring play were Kadyn Anderson, Abi Bartusek, Kiera Bechen, Natalie Boelter, Jo Davis, Kayla Einertson, Mallo-ry Jirik and Jericho Juenemann. The production stage manager was Ella Schoenbauer.

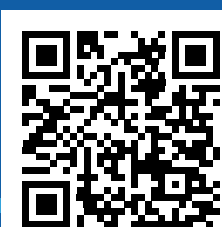


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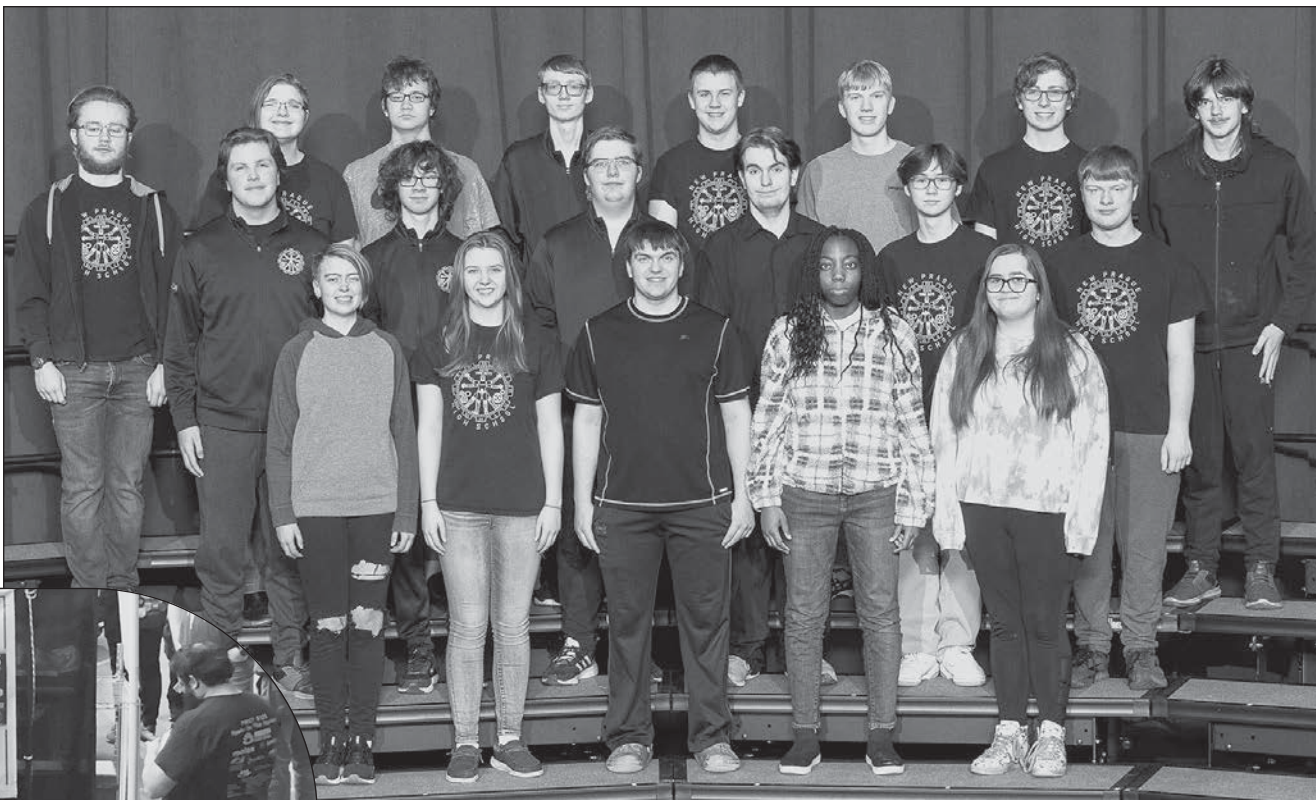


Robotics

After nine years, New Prague High School's robotics team continues to provide students interested in robotics a chance to work in a team setting toward a goal as they learn and adapt to adjust on the fly in a competitive setting.

Robotics is aimed at creating a device which is built from the ground up to accomplish a specific task in a competition. The rules of the competition and game are released after the Christmas holiday break. Working in groups, students focus their efforts on the specific elements of the robot they'll build. Some will work on programming, others will prepare the apparatus needed to prepare for competition. Another group works on promoting the robotics team throughout the community.

"We meet all the time. We're always doing things," said Dan Cross, an industrial technology teacher and one of the team's advisors.



The team traveled to Cedar Falls, Iowa, in late-April for a regional competition. The New Prague Robotics team finished 35th in a field of 52 teams. It struggled with technical difficulties and the impact of an inadvertent collision with another robot during a preliminary round of competition.

In addition to its work preparing for the next competition, the group is also working on outreach to the next generation of robotics students. The team promotes the program in the district's elementary schools and also offers presentations at community festivals, like the Scott County Fair and Dozinky, New Prague's Czech harvest festival.

The team includes Craig Brezina, Kayla Chaffee, Princess Chinedu-Eneh, Marcus Ferguson, Liam Foley, Zachary Furlong, Jack Gilles, Ashton Horejsi, Tyler Jahn, Rose Lancaster, Lacy McLean, Nathan Metko, Arieanna Moen, Elijah Musta, Logan Nickelson, Adam Oeltjen, Caid Peterson, Brandon Schellin, Caleb Simon and Allen Voss. The team's coaches and advisors include Dan Cross, Troy Whipple, Brett Oeltjen and John Oellrich.

Yearbook

The students work throughout the school year to capture in photographs the important and memorable events of the school year.

Four members of the nine-member staff are seniors. The 208-page yearbook is filled with photos of the Class of 2023 along with the juniors, sophomores, freshmen and the school staff. The rest of the yearbook is filled with photos of activities throughout the school year. The photos are arranged chronologically, said Rachelle Balfe, the yearbook staff's advisor. With hundreds, maybe thousands of digital photos to consider, the group's biggest challenge is selecting which images from the year will make the grade.

"It's kind of like a digital scrapbook," she said.

The yearbook can be purchased through the end of May online at newprague-



yearbook.com for \$60.

The staff includes Ava Barsness, Taylor Blumberg, Madeline Boulanger, Emily

McCarthy, Anna Schellin, Mason Sebesta, Lea Sirek, Naomi Sticha and Ella Sundstrom.

Speech

Members of New Prague High School's speech team enjoyed a successful season and advanced one member of the small group to the section finals.

The eight-member team was led by one senior, Mason Schmidt, and five juniors. Team members selected their respective categories and began working on their presentations. The interpretation categories include creative expression, storytelling, duo interpretation, humorous interpretation, serious drama, serious poetry, serious prose and extemporaneous reading. The public address categories include extemporaneous speaking, discussion, original oratory, informative speaking and great speeches.

The season began in late-fall with students selecting their respective categories and began working on them. They advanced to competitions beginning in January. Contestants are in a room with a judge and up to five other people competing in their category. The contestants, dressed formally, practice for success.

"Over the course of the season, they become the master of their presentations," said Lewis Samuel, the advisor to the speech team.



New Prague's Mallory Jirik advanced to the section finals in April, just missing a trip to the state competition in extemporaneous speaking. As a team, the group finished second in four of the six invitational tournaments it entered.

The benefits of participation in speech include improved public speaking and articulation, confidence, performing research and becoming part of a small, tight-knit

group. The team's members include Anna Cox, Amelia Deuth, Duane Menorkpor, Andrew Cervenka, Mallory Jirik, Andrew Krautkremer, Naomi Musta, Mason Schmidt and advisor Sam Lewis, a language arts teacher. As a feeder to the high school team, New Prague has a middle school speech team with 18 to 20 members, Lewis said.





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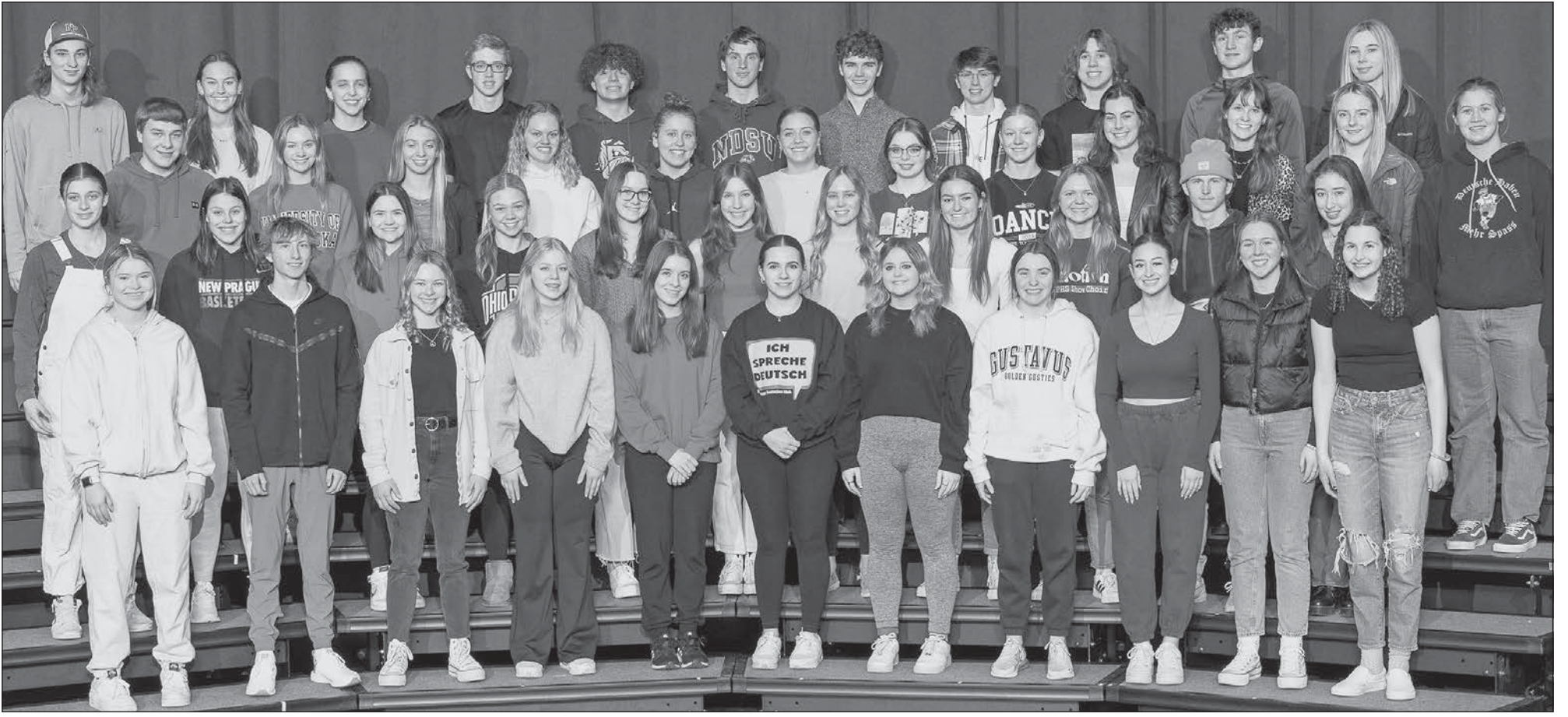
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Submitted photo

Members of the New Prague High School chapter of the National Honor Society include Charlie Ambroz, Micah Anderson, Emily Archambault, Ava Barsness, Ella Barsness, Abigail Bartusek, Eric Berg, Evan Bible, Natalie Biren, Madeline Boulanger, Jackson Braith, Rachel Brandt, Grace Carlson, Andrew Cervenka, Hayden Champine, Eleanor (Nellie) Dalsin, Ella Danner, Foster Dresen, Melissa Egan, Cara Erickson, Maura Erickson, Natalie Fishel, Alli Foust, Britlynn Franek, Natalia Garita, Kate Geiger, Margaret Giesen, Ella Gjerde, Hugh Goggins, Abigail Hankinson, Paige Hawley, Jenna Hlavac, Kyan Hopke, Mallory Jirik, Eva Johnson, Gabriel Juenemann, Ryan King, Katie Kotek, Andrew Krautkremer, Thomas Kulakevich, Hannah Langeberg, Inga Lexa,

Brita Lillquist, Caitlyn Luckow, Ella Lund, Paige Marschall, Alexis Mattern, Zachary Mattern, Annie McBroom, Emily McCarthy, Brynn McLaughlin, Luke Meger, Sophia Metzдорff, Mia Monroe, Baylee Mushitz, Tanner Nordrum, Anna Novak, Henry Novak, Mackenzie O'Brien, Mieka Pederson, Taylor Peterson, Peyton Plaisance, Liam Roufs, Savannah Ryburn, Anna Schellin, Caroline Seurer, Sophia Smith, Samantha Solheid, Ava Specht, Lauren Spiess, Kayla Thorsfeldt, Abigail Tostenson, Madison Tupy, Averi Wagner, Erin Wiener, Carly Wiener, Elizabeth Wieskus, Owen Wilkens, Alexa Witt, Tatum Zimmerman, Annie Zweber and advisor Matt Stensrud.

National Honor Society

There's a group of students at New Prague High School looking for ways to help people and better the community. They are student leaders, participants in student activities and academically talented.

There are 81 juniors and seniors in the New Prague High School chapter of National Honor Society. Of the 81, 44 are seniors. They filled out an application at the start of their junior or senior year. A committee decides whether the student will be accepted into the chapter, said Matt Stensrud, a language arts teacher who is also the NHS advisor. The criteria for acceptance are the four tenants of NHS – scholarship, leadership, character and service. Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.40.

About 70 percent of the applicants are accepted into NHS, Stensrud said.

The primary reason applications are declined are a lack of volunteer service hours or a lack of leadership opportunities. "Many of these students, when they're applying at the end

of their sophomore year, they haven't had the leadership opportunities," Stensrud said.

The students in NHS are expected to commit to completing 30 hours of volunteer service in a school year. That can be a challenge for some NHS students, many who are involved in athletics or other school-related activities, Stensrud said. Meeting the commitment to 30 hours is a sign of a student's character. The local chapter's leaders established the Peace Center food shelf as the primary benefactor of fundraising efforts.

"These kids are already in a lot of things and they still find value in giving back to the community," Stensrud said.

The group's officers select an organization or cause to support at the beginning of the school year. In the past two years, NHS students have raised over about \$8,000 for Peace Center.

"Last year, we raised \$4,050 and the year before it was about the same," Stensrud said. "The last two years have been

really successful."

Their main fundraisers are a poinsettia sale and a tent city project to raise awareness of homelessness. The students also collect coats and food donations for Peace Center at Halloween.

The group has found local organizations are a more attractive source of funds than out-of-town groups, Stensrud said. National Honor Society students also donate their time for other initiatives. NHS members serve as bell-ringers for the Salvation Army Red Kettle fundraiser before the holidays. The students also help run an elementary book fair, a Halloween party, an ag fair and a highway cleanup. They also maintain a park cleanup effort at Heritage Park in New Prague.

"These kids are just like all the other kids. A lot of them work really hard academically. A lot of them take upper-level classes," Stensrud said.

Trojan Times

This year's Trojan Times staff worked to get the news out to students through its online newspaper – www.nphstrojanimes.org – published monthly.

Editors included seniors Micah Anderson and Phia Huebner and junior Mikal Hvidsten along with junior Tatum Zimmerman as the sports editor. Rachel Harmon was the advisor. Highlights from the year include some stellar photography from sophomores Taylor Blumberg and Ashdyn Padelford, excellent profiles by juniors Tatum Zimmerman and Baylee Mushitz, insightful stories by junior Katelyn Sirek and senior Ava Barsness. There were clever movie reviews by junior Cora Coleman, thoughtful stories exploring issues related to mental health by junior JuliAnn Falconer, and solid reporting by sophomore Raquel Ahrens, senior Abi Bartusek, junior Taylor Moeding, junior Katelyn Sirek and senior Lea Sirek.

The staff includes editors Micah Anderson, Mikal Hvidsten, Phia Huebner and Tatum Zimmerman, and writers Raquel Ahrens, Ava

Barsness, Abi Bartusek, Taylor Blumberg, Cora Coleman, JuliAnn Falconer, Taylor Moeding, Baylee Mushitz, Naomi Musta, Katelyn Sirek, Lea Sirek, photographers Taylor Blumberg, Ashdyn Padelford, Lea Sirek, Izzy Tuma and advisor Rachel Harmon.

The end of an era

This school year marks the end of the Trojan Times. Budget cuts and declining student interest have driven this decision, said Harmon. The Trojan Times went fully online when Harmon became the advisor in 2019. This allowed for more creativity with photography and more up-to-date stories.

Harmon becoming the advisor was a chance for her to come full circle. She was a writer and editor of The Tatler (the original name of the NPBS newspaper) from 1988-1991. While she noted it is sad to see the end of the student newspaper, the reality is that student interest in producing and reading the paper has declined over the years.



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Archery Club

Two years after the pandemic put the season in the quiver, the New Prague Archery Club is enjoying more students participating in a lifetime activity.

This past season, the team saw 132 students in fourth through 12th grades out for archery. Of those students, 40 were at the high school. A year ago, the first year back after COVID, the team had 120 students out. The increases in 2022-23 are in both the elementary and high schools levels, said John Love, one of the volunteer adult advisors for the program.

The team's season runs from early-December through March. It follows the guidance of the National Archery in the

Schools program. NASP is an in-school program aimed at improving educational performance among fourth- through 12th-graders. Students can participate in archery if they are in another activity, Love said. With a focus on developing a passion for a lifetime activity, students learn focus, self-control, discipline, patience, and the life lessons required to be successful in the classroom and in life, according to its website.

With no shortage of participants but a lack of available gym space, the team's members practice two days a week. The New Prague Archery Club participated in nine tournaments this past season, including the state tournament in Duluth during March. Archers compete individually, but a

percentage of their scores is used to calculate a team score. The competitions teach lessons in safety, self-confidence, self-discipline and good teamwork, Love said.

"This is a sport that appeals to all kinds of students," Love said.

With older archers helping the youngsters, the young participants develop confidence and a tighter team bond, Love said. The team's members work together very well, he said.

"It's really neat when the younger kids look up to the high school kids," Love said.



Members of the New Prague Archery Club in elementary school include Peyton Klepperich, Joe Meyer, Miles Robertson, Jack Sticha, Anthony DeGrego, Tommy Cameron, Evelyn Meyers, Ashton Yender, Masen Malecha, Margareta Maxa, Jack Helgeson, Joseph Reagan, Jonah Coppicus, Eleanor Hokeness, Ryker Wachter, Bentley Zahratka, Giovanni Rossini, Dylan Entrikin, Nikolai Verhoeven, Serenity Green, Charlie Moeller, Ari Lubinski, Charles Hill, Oliver Buszmann, Lincoln Bennett, Declan Murphy, Gem-

ma Thielen, Oliver Hertzfeld, Quinn Mackenthun, Braedan Herrmann, Olivia Byrne, Natalie Novak, Ellie Smithson, Hunter Lerohl, Ella Schuck, Kora Christenson, Gabriel Massmann, Max Smith, Abby Nybo, Lorelei Pautz, Vivian Yahnke, Hank Seitzer, Logan Nesbitt, Jacob DeGross, Jefferson Koller, Owen Carlson, Logan Bundy, Zach Vogel and Lucy Goerish.

Image courtesy of Picture This Photography Portrait Studio



Members of the New Prague Archery Club in middle school include Rylie Pint, Joe Meurer, Liam O'Gara, Aaron Bui, Matthew Bicknese, Milo Slavik, Brady Steinhoff, Brady Wagner, Brody Pautz, Brihanna Etzler, Elliot Kalina, Saul Pautz, Dustin Bartusek, Cameron Giesen, Teagan Hovey, Evan Cornell, Easton Weinandt, Payton Thielen, Briggs Gregor, Jonah Massmann, Tegan DeGrego, Daniel Vaughn, Devyn Yender,

Kinley Mayer, Peyton Syde, Parker Will, Ruby Schaumburg, Jason Miller, Westin Gregory, Victor Von Neupert, Lilly Meurer, Dane Tupy, Aubrey Bicknese, Gavyn Melby, Benjamin Smithson, Elias Pautz, David Vaughn, Lynkoln Sirek, Harley Ferrier, Madelyn Weiers, Kennedy Koller, Emma Duffy and Dominic Mitchell.

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New Prague High School students on the archery club team include Parker Pint, Brienna Klepperich, Ava Chlan, Ben Quant, Kellgren Jabs, Emily Boyda, Ellie Bawdon, Mason Christenson, Saddie Massmann, Harty Kalina, Jacob Weber, Ezekiel Russo, Ayden Hallberg, Liam Nordby, Micah Robertson, Isabel Sirek, Eleanor Jung, Emmy Will, Brekken Ondich, Carter Callahan, Marisa Doddo, Brandon Love, Eleanor Hartmann, Cory Schroeder, Brock Gregor, Jacob Pexa, Collin Boyda, Natalie DeGrego, Mackenzie Stepka, Mason Raean, Eva Johnson, Jayda Blaschko, Ellen Clay, Sam Decker, Clayton

Johnson, Allison Ott, Abree Kocina, McKenna Schulte, Selah Scherman and Paige Ferrer. The coaches for the New Prague archery team include, top row John Love, Mike Schulte, Brian Pint, Stephanie Pint, Jeremy Chlan, David Tupy Heather Vikla, Gregg Kocina, Erin Klepperich, Joe Picha, Brian Schroeder Brent Banasiuk Jacob Love, Nancy Hartmann, Jeff Williamson, Hunter Minor, Kevin Hartmann, Callie Schroeder, Kaiyah Swick, Jackie Mackenthun and Scott Mackenthun.

Spanish Club

Foul weather limited the club's activities this year. Club members were scheduled to gather for a meeting, but foul weather forced snow days and e-learning, limiting the opportunities for students to get together.

When they were able to gather, Spanish Club members met after school at least once a month to do some fun activities, like make papel picado which is common during the Day of the Dead celebration the end of October and beginning of November. The group watched a movie in Spanish and played A Minute to Win It against each other.

"We hope to start a Spanish Club in the middle school or have them attend some of our meetings next year to get

them interested in the language and in the culture," said Kari Schroeder, a NPHS Spanish teacher.

The club's members included Ava Barsness, Ella Barsness, Georgia Beno, Dominic Berry, Jacob Bisek, Taylor Blumberg, Katie Boulanger, Zoe Bruegger, Anna Burkhardtmeier, Grace Carlson, Hayden Champine, Audrey DeGross, Anara Denn, Amelia Deuth, Jessica Dropik, Alexander Dvorak, Kayla Einertson, Natalia Garita, Kate Geiger, Claudia Giesen, Jenna Hlavac, Ella Horejsi, Sophia Huebner, Ellie Hulse, Jordynn Mensing, Eva Johnson, Gabriel Juenemann, Anna Kemp, Hannah Kraft, Rose Lancaster, Tess Larson, Jena Lawrence, Ella Lund, Paige Marschall, Alexis Mattern,

Sophia Metzdorff, Taylor Moeding, Mia Monroe, Alexis Montour, Millie Moser, Carley Motx, Alex Nelson, Avery Newman, Mackenzie O'Brien, Kate Oeltjen (Tristan), Audrey Olson, Leslie Otero, Payton Peterson, Arianna Roncker, Grayson Routs, Jeri Sackett, Anna Schellin, Payten Schieffer, Mason Schmidt, Cora Schuller, Connor Seeland, Caroline Seurer, Katelyn Sirek, Samantha Solheid, Ava Specht, Avery Terning, Ellie Thomas, Kayla Thorsfeldt, Laura Von Neupert, Averi Wagner and Annalise Wilson. Besides Schroeder, Michele Koepf and Julie Meier were also advisors to the club.



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NPHS choirs

New Prague High School has a talented selection of students making beautiful music with their voices. The school's various choirs include dozens of students who have earned a variety of conference and state honors.

The school's advanced choirs include the Treble Choir with 37 members. The Trojan Choir includes 28 members and the Concert Choir features 60 10th- through 12th-graders. The Belles Voix Choir has 27 members. They practice and perform under the direction of Nicole Thietje, the high school's vocal music instructor.

The school's national choir honorees include Kayla Einertson, Gabriel Juneman and Noah Stocker. The Trojans' all Metro West Choir includes Kady Anderson, Micah Anderson, Kayla Einertson, Jady Hamilton, Sophia Huebner, Mikkal Hvidsten, Amara Prochaska and Noah Stocker. NPHS singers honored at the Dorian Vocal Festival at Luther College include Micah Anderson, Mandi

Becher, Sophia Huber and Noah Stocker.

New Prague High School students participate in choir to fulfill their requirement for a fine-arts credit. The classes allow them to develop a talent and enjoy a place where "they can be themselves and learn about themselves and belong," Thietje said.

Submitted photo

Five New Prague High School students – (From left) juniors Lacy McLean, Jena Lawrence (alternate), junior Kady Anderson, Olivia Phipps and sophomore Jericho Juenemann earned all-state honors in various choirs. The students were chosen through a process in which judges listened to submitted recordings and adjudicated them on only their sound. The students submitted three recordings for the judges to consider and were chosen as some of the best in Minnesota.



Green Team

Promoting sustainability and preserving green space for the community and future generations, New Prague High School's Green Team is working to promote environmental awareness.

The group has participated in and promoted trees sales – red maple, chokecherry and Colorado spruce – in cooperation with the city and soil and water conservation district. The group of nine

students and advisors have participated in pollinator gardens, summer gardening and grown tomato plants. It has grown fruits hydroponically and also raised micro-greens and strawberries, said Karla Schultz, a NPHS physical education teacher and one of the team's advisors.

"I want kids to know where food really comes from," she said.

The team meets the first

Wednesday of each month and discusses ideas to promote sustainability and other forms of promoting energy savings.

The Green Team's members include Olivia Clark, Taylor Blumberg, Ali Prag, Amelia Deuth, Katherine Boulanger, Cora Coleman, Anna Novak, Lea Sirek and advisors Karla Schultz, Lynn Schoenbauer.



Submitted photo

The Green Team at New Prague High School promotes sustainability for the benefits of the environment. Students have grown lettuce and other fruits and vegetables both indoors and outdoors.

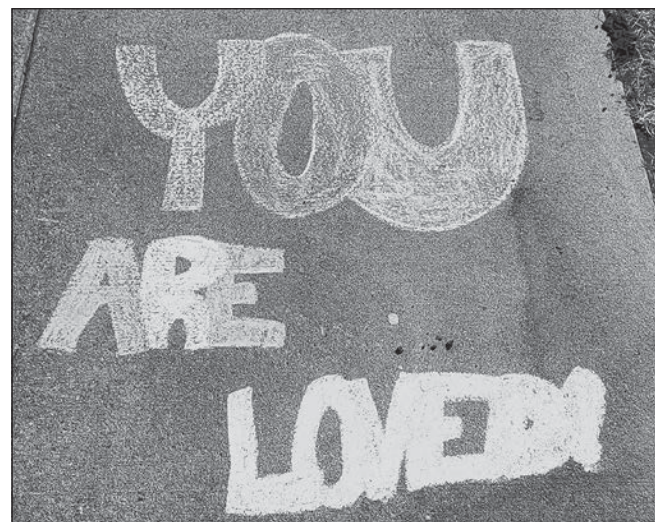


GSA Club

The GSA (Genders & Sexualities Alliance) Club is a group that meets weekly and offers support to LGBTQIA+ students.

Friends of LGBTQIA+ youth also join to show support and acceptance. About a dozen students typically attend the meetings, said Lex Lammers, one of the group's advisors. At the meetings, students talk about current social issues, historical events and influential people and how to strengthen overall well-being.

GSA clubs are necessary to foster safe and affirming school environments. Clubs also help students feel more connected to their peers and school community. GSA members recently took time to write positive messages in chalk outside the school for their peers to see.



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NPHS does 'Mamma Mia!' for fall musical

New Prague High School took audiences on a trip to a Greek island with its fall musical "Mamma Mia!" in November.

Using hits from the pop group ABBA, the musical told the story of a young woman's search for her birth father. On the eve of her wedding, Sophie brings together three men from her mom's past who had last visited the island 20 years ago. Sophie is on a quest to discover the identity of her father in the hopes of having him escort her down the aisle.

Ben Thietje directed, with music direction and choreography by Nicole Thietje, was the tech director Dan Cross, and set construction was led by Dan Roden.

Performances were Nov. 18, 19, 20, 26 and 27.

The cast of characters of "Mamma Mia" and the students they are being played by were Donna Sheridan: Sophia Huebner, Sophie Sheridan: Kayla Einertson, Tanya: Kady Anderson, Rosie: Leslie Otero, Sam Carmichael: Gabriel Juenemann, Harry Bright: Mikkal Hvidsten, Bill Austin: Micah Anderson, Sky: Gabriel Challberg, Ali: Savannah Ryburn, Lisa: Amara Prochaska, Pepper: Jericho Juenemann, Eddie: Noah Stocker, Father Alexandrios: Ashton Horejsi, plus the ensemble of islanders, Taverna employees, wedding guests and others are Trinity Ahlers, Emily Archambault, Abi Bartusek, Natalie Biren, Natalie Boelter, Amanda Boyer, Josephine Davis, Danica Den Hartog, Marisa Doddo, Kayla Dvorak, Melissa Egan, Charley Furlong, Carys Hesser, Madison Jensen, Francesca Kruger, Syd Link, Saddle Massmann, Ava Mastous, Meredith Mayer, Emily McCarthy, Lacy McLean, Anders Moen, Avery Monnens, Olivia Phipps, Isabel Podratz, Ava Rivard, Caitlyn Ruhland, Ella Schoenbauer, Lauren Shea, Bella Smith, Vivian VanderWert, Whitney White and Tomi Williams. Stage manager was Abi Bartusek.



NPHS's one-act play has amazing run

New Prague High School's one-act play troupe had an amazing run as it finished the season reaching the Section AA competition. Held Feb. 4, at Minnetonka High School, New Prague's production of "Eurydice" by Sarah Ruhl ended at fourth place.

New Prague had a stellar run leading up to sections as it won first for the second straight year at the Metro West Conference One-Act Play Festival Jan. 21 in New Prague High School's auditorium. Score totals for the festival were New Prague 6, Chanhassen 7, Bloomington Jefferson 8, Chaska 10 and Orono 14.

New Prague held a public performance at the high school auditorium Jan. 27.

New Prague then won first out of five teams at sub-section competition in St. Peter Jan. 28. New Prague received a perfect score as all three judges voted it first place. Jordan placed second and Hutchinson was third.

At section competition at Minnetonka High School, the final rankings were Minnetonka, first; Chaska, second; Hutchinson, third; New Prague, fourth, Chanhassen, fifth, and Jordan, sixth.

New Prague's production of "Eurydice," under the direction of Ben Thietje, was a modern adaptation of the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, except it is told from Eurydice's point of view.

The cast included Leslie Otero as Eurydice, Mikkal Hvidsten as Orpheus, Micah Anderson as Eurydice's father, Amara Prochaska as a nasty interesting man/the lord of the underworld, Kayla Einertson as Little Stone, Emily Archambault as Big Stone and Sophia Huebner as Loud Stone. In the en-

semble were Kady Anderson, Abi Bartusek, Natalie Boelter, the stage crew were Jericho Juenemann, Carson Logelin and Savannah Ryburn, Ella Schoenbauer and Noah Stocker. In Isabel Sirek.




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