



The Hellgate Lance

Building A Safer School

Julia Key
Editor
Eryn Good
Reporter

Current students in the MCPS District may be familiar with the experience of a school remodel. In 2020 alone MCPS High Schools completed work on high school buildings with a bond of 70 million dollars, but problems still arise almost everyday at Hellgate.

Hellgate principle Judson Miller was along for the ride through the school's remodel "During our three-and-a-half year (Hellgate) remodel there were a couple elements of safety that were included in that remodel; our camera system, the single point entry, another one was to put all of the student free space (commons, library), where kids go, where they might not be attached to a classroom, in to one central area, those are the three big changes" said Miller.

However, there is still work that needs to be done within Hellgate High School. According to Miller, "We've got some issues with the actual front doors, they continue to be a problem in a number of ways, and the HVAC systems, how power interacts with the boilers and the heating system and the cooling system is a constant daily juggling act."

While these concerns are a big issue for Hellgate as a school, safety and protecting students is still Miller's primary concern going forward. "Safety is always going to be a collective effort, the best safety tool that we have is knowing each other and if you see something say something," said Miller.

When students speak up on any safety concerns, staff and administration can take quicker action, and resolve the problem efficiently. This will allow students and staff to not worry about safety, but to be able to focus on other concerns in their lives.

Over winter break Hellgate had to deal with a few issues within the school. A pipe broke and flooded the school with hundreds of gallons of water; the school also struggled to regain full power after the power went out on the last day of school before break. It was hard to figure out what went back on after the outage in such a large school.

Last year, lead was found in many Montana schools water systems, including Hellgate's, which raised concern amongst many students, but according to Miller this actually isn't very

uncommon. "I want to normalize a little bit of that. It still doesn't make it okay, as you can imagine it's very expensive to fix. Hellgate came out okay in that process, a lot of the shutdown areas were places in the building that were never really drinking water, the science building, the welding shop. It's inconvenient, but at least it wasn't students drinking lead in water, but there is a plan. It's going to be expensive and it's gonna take some time."

Lead-tainted water showed up in most MCPS schools last year and some priority is being taken within the school systems. "Grade schools are taking priority because it affects kids more. We have things bagged and tagged. It is mostly a lot of sinks but people don't normally drink out of sinks but we are running through 25 to 30 of the water jugs a week. The water jugs allow for water and for cold water," said Bill Fischer, one of Hellgate's maintenance staff.

The biggest problem with finding fixes in the school is funding. "(Funding) comes from a variety of sources, we get federal dollars, state dollars, local tax dollars and then we get some grant money, and it's a balance of all of those things" said Miller.

The school is addressing many of the infrastructural problems at hand, but these types of issues take money and a whole lot of patience. Safety is at the forefront of Hellgate's administration and while they address old issues and find new ones, students also need to find that patience and understand issues like this in the building take time.



Elevator construction in the science building

Photo by Julia Key

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Ukraine: A Year Later

Kahlia Loewen
Reporter

Remember when all the cranky people couldn't stop complaining about gas prices? Well that was due to sanctions of Russian oil. In an attempt to dissuade Russia from its war with Ukraine, several countries banded together to slowly destroy the Russian economy through sanctions. Sadly these attempts though slowly crippling the Russian economy have not been enough and Ukraine is nearing a full year of brutal and bloody battle.

On Feb. 24, 2023 Ukraine and Russia will hit the one year anniversary of the war. The world thought this would be quick and easy, that Russia would take Ukraine full force in a matter of months. That did not happen.

On Feb. 24 last year Vladimir Putin sent around 200,000 soldiers into Ukraine thinking he could storm the capital Kyiv in a matter of days. Though successful in capturing some territory, they could not capture Kyiv. As the months continued, Russia was forced to retreat from their captured region and has since lost more than half the territory they seized in the invasion.

Reasoning for Putin's claimed "special military operation" was demilitarization and de-Nazifying Ukraine, as well as claims that Ukraine's government has committed genocide for the past eight years. These claims have absolutely no basis or evidence. Putin has been unable to explain these claims he's referring to as a supposed basis for his invasion.

As tensions rise between discussions, Zelenskyy is holding steady and refusing to give up any territory to Russia. The composure of the president continuously inspires citizens in their time of suffering.

Though the odd timing of the war beginning just as Ukraine was taking steps to join NATO leaves most people believing that instead of this being an attempt to cure Nazism in Ukraine, it is

more likely that Russia felt too uncomfortable with its neighbor joining the western defensive alliance which allows NATO to sit directly on Russian/Ukrainian borders.

The Ukrainian military has fought tirelessly to protect its citizens as their president Zelenskyy works around assassination attempts, trying to keep his people's hope high.

Throughout the fighting, America has sent an estimated \$24.9 billion in security assistance in order to demonstrate our alliance and commitment to Ukraine while not encroaching on World War 3 territory, according to the U.S. Department of State.

As a show of dedication to Ukraine America and many other NATO countries have sanctioned Russian imports which has boosted gas prices.

Though Ukraine has fought as morally as possible when in a war, Russia has not shown the same courtesy. Throughout the war, Russia has committed countless war crimes, such as deliberate attacks against civilian targets, massacres of civilians, torture and rape of women and children, and indiscriminate attacks in densely populated areas.

Starting off the new year, there was an exchange of 100 prisoners of war between Russia and Ukraine. This is the 36th exchange between Russia and Ukraine since the beginning of the war, now totaling 1,646 military and civilian people's exchange between the two countries.

Though we're coming to the year anniversary, many people are wondering how much longer Ukraine will hold against Russia and how much longer Russia can afford to continue warring against Ukraine. This first year of war has held much suffering for the Ukrainian people but has also proven how strong their country truly is.

Everyone who can only watch or read or hear about this war must be inspired to stand for what is right and not crumble under corruption and greed. Although America can't join the fight for Ukraine, they have our support and we can only hope that is enough.

Year Long Timeline:

February 24, 2022 - The war begins as Russia launches its full scale invasion of Ukraine.

March - Food and Energy prices increase while Russian forces begin to meet resistance around Kyiv. Evidence of war crimes comes to light.

April - Russian forces begin to turn their attacks towards largely civilian populated areas.

May - Different countries begin taking steps towards joining NATO.

June - 100 days of brutal, bloody battle. High profile brands begin to leave Russia.

July - Russian forces advance eastwards and shut down Nord stream gas pipelines.

August - European gas exports are stopped.

September - Russia sends 300,000 troops to fight in Ukraine, 1,000 protestors are arrested in Russia.

October - Ukraine bombs a Russian bridge, inspiring Russia to bomb Ukrainian infrastructure.

November - Ukrainian troops work to reclaim one of the earlier lost cities while inflation rises.

December - The U.S. pledges alliance to Ukraine while Russia states it's finally ready to negotiate.

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Young Voters Turn the 2022 Mid-Terms Around

Ila Bell
Reporter

This past midterm election, young voters ages 18-29 showed up to the polls, defying forecasts and proving the power of the young generation's vote.

The 2022 midterms, on Nov. 8, had many Americans awaiting the close Senate race results and the outcome of the predicted "red wave". However, the decisive factor of many of the elections across states was lying on the shoulders of the youth.

Young voters showed a 27% turnout rate in the recent election, and in battleground states, that number grew to 31%, according to The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. This is a significant increase from previous elections and has proven crucial to certain states. For Georgia in particular, runoff elections have been a direct result of the increased spike in young voter participation.

According to The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, in Georgia, youth populations overwhelmingly supported the Democratic party, with a 63% to 36% majority in favor of Democratic candidates. Georgia, increasingly becoming a tossup state with many elections, has been one of the deciding factors in this particular midterm. A major contributor to this was the fact that young voter turnout more than doubled this year in Georgia.

The concluding results, on Dec. 6, to the Georgia runoffs turned in favor

towards Democratic candidate Rafael Warnock, defeating Republican party opposition, Hershal Walker. The push in the runoffs that allowed Warnock to take the seat in the Senate was the voter demographic of ages 18-24. The specific demographic spiked in comparison to other voters in similar age ranges, according to the Georgia Secretary of State Data Hub.

Warnock held a runoff and midterm campaign that targeted the younger age demographic. Through turning out to college campuses across Georgia, Warnock keyed into an age demographic with big influence this midterm election. Walker lost support of many of the young voters in Georgia after comments made about people born after 1990 not "earning" the right to fight for change in the country. Young voter turnout has proven to be a key factor in not only the midterms but in runoff elections as well, and Walker's failure to gain the support of Georgia's youth, may have cost him the runoffs.

A spike in political activism from the younger generation in the U.S. might lead to more politicians targeting the specific age demographic. This is especially true after this election, which was proof of the power that the youngest generation has in the polls. Politicians are finding that they can no longer ignore an age demographic with so much power, forcing them to broaden their campaigns and listen to policies and issues important to the younger generation.

According to exit polls, 1 in 8 midterm voters were under the age of 30. The predicted "red wave" of the Republican party didn't go as anticipated and the Senate stayed in control of the Democratic party with both Arizona and Nevada going blue. The key voters in the Arizona election were, like many states, the youth. According to exit polls, voters ages 18-29 preferred Democratic candidates by a 76% margin overall. As the Arizona votes were being counted, the predicted win for Kari Lake (R) switched in favor of Katie Hobbs (D) who pulled ahead as the mail-in votes were counted and the Democratic votes took over.

The young voter turnout was a large factor in the election results, however the preference towards Democrats among young voters is what mainly caused the turnout of the midterms.

The upward trend of youth voters continually becoming more and more impactful can be seen in the past midterms. In the 2018 midterms, there was an overall voter turnout rate of 49.4%, comparable to this year with a 46.9% turnout rate. This is an incredible spike from the 2014 midterms where the turnout was only 36% of all eligible voters.

The impact that the young vote has, will continue to grow as the younger generation continues to vote in the future. According to Pew Research, voters are typically very unlikely to switch political parties over time. So what does this mean for America's future politics? The youth will increasingly be the deciding factor in elections as they grow to make up more of the voter population. The future of elections are truly in the hands of the youth and the 2022 midterms were a representation of how impactful the young vote can be.

Youth Voter Turnout at 27%



Second Highest in 3 Decades

Hellgate offers suicide prevention resources

Layla Wilkerson
Reporter

Suicide is a very big topic in your teenage years. Whether it's a class talk about asking for help or it's your own personal conversation with someone you trust, it is very important that you know your options for help. As teenagers we truly have so much going on. The transition from elementary school to preparing for life outside of these classroom walls always has good and bad effects on people.

You can make new friends, get new classes, and find new stuff that you enjoy doing. But you can also lose old friends, get exhausted from the overwhelming amount of work thrown onto you, and lose time to do things you enjoy. Parents are not the most understanding people and we know that. A lot of times, parents don't know how to help a suicidal teen. So it's very important that you know what options are offered at Hellgate.

For starters, you can go to your counselor at any time in the day. They can offer to talk with you or help you to find the best person for you to talk to. Sometimes all you really need is a good cry. The counselors all offer to be there for you and support you as you work through your struggles. There is also a blue-card option you can use during the school day. Sometimes things happen that you need time to work through. Hellgate understands that.

You can honestly talk to any trusted adult in the building. The most important thing to remember is that you are important. You are worthy. And you're doing great! Everyone needs help sometimes. You never have to be afraid to reach out and ask for help.

There are several options for suicide prevention. However there are 5 specific steps that are recommended by most. The first step is to ask. If you are concerned about someone you know and think they are thinking about suicide then the first thing to do is ask. This opens the floor for a judgment-free conversation for them. It can be really hard talking about suicide for some people so it's very important to be calm and listen to what that person might have to say. The second step is to be there. Offering your support to someone who is severely struggling can save a life in itself. Because we all know that a good friend makes even the darkest days better.

The next step for this is to help keep them safe. Now this does not mean you need to put your friend in a straight jacket. Just being with them and letting them know you care and want to help is extremely important in moments of crisis. Keep them safe while you help them connect with the right resources. That's also our next step. It's important to know who can offer their help when someone is in crisis. Hellgate has a very wide range of resources. Starting with people to talk to.

Suicide Prevention Resources

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention- 888-333-2377

Trevor Project, Preventing Suicide Amon LGBT Youth-866-488-7386

Montana Statewide Suicide Hotline- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Montana Suicide Prevention Web- www.prc.mt.gov/suicideprevention

The school resource officer, AKA Randy is a safe and easy person to chat with. I, myself have had some very vulnerable conversations with him.

The final step in suicide prevention is a follow up. It's important to remind that person that you care for them even after a crisis. A simple phone call or text message could mean the world to someone. This step increases the support that your offering and gives an opportunity for any missed opportunities to help, to return. Everyone will struggle at one point in their life. Everyone's situation is different and you only know as much as they tell you. If you or anyone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide please call the Montana Statewide Suicide Hotline.

Procrastination: An Unexpected Ally?

Sophia Marsolek
Reporter

So there I was, sitting at my desk, the clock reads about 8:00 PM. I have been sitting here for hours and written across the page are three sentences. 600-word essay. Due tonight. 11:59 PM. Three sentences.

I have deep cleaned my bathroom. Walked the

dog. Twice. Organized my entire bookshelf, by color. Baked a large batch of chocolate chip cookies. And here I am, three hours later, sitting in front of my computer, with three measly sentences. How did I get here?

Many of us find ourselves in situations similar to this. We know we should have started much sooner. And yet, we keep finding ourselves close to the deadline with, well, three sentences. The culprit? Procrastination. A habit many of us can relate to. In fact, according to the American Psychological Association, 20 percent of U.S. men and women are chronic procrastinators. That's higher than the number of people diagnosed with clinical depression or phobias. And it's not just an inconvenience. Over time, chronic procrastination has not only productivity costs, but measurably destructive effects on our mental and physical health.

For something that is so normalized, how much do we really understand about procrastination? So many of us relate to the stress and inconvenience that comes with it, it's time we examine this habit through a different lens.

Etymologically, "procrastination" is derived from the Latin verb procrastinare which means to put off until tomorrow. But it's more than just voluntarily delaying. Procrastination is also derived from the ancient Greek word akrasia, which is to do something against our better judgment. So why do we do it? If we have to get it done anyways, why delay the task and cause ourselves ultimately more stress?

In his notable TED Talk, *Inside the Mind of a Master Procrastinator*, Tim Urban uses an analogy to explain this concept. Urban describes the idea that we all have a rational decision maker that lives behind the wheel in our brains. For the most part, this "rational decision-maker" remains in control. But for us procrastinators, we also have what Urban refers to as an "instant gratification Monkey." When we are faced with a task, our rational decision maker may say something like, "This is a perfect time to get some work done." But the monkey has other plans. He'll interject with something like, "Let's binge all 18 seasons of *Grey's Anatomy*...again!" derailing any chance of productivity. The instant gratification monkey lives entirely in the present moment. He has no memory of the past, no knowledge of the future, and he only cares about two things: easy and fun. This push and pull relationship between the rational decision maker and instant gratification monkey is what drives us to procrastinate. Urban reminds us, "We need to stay aware of the Instant Gratification Monkey. That's a job for all of us."

In addition, psychologist Dr. Hal Hershfield of UCLA conducted research that shows that, on a neural level, we perceive our "future selves" more like strangers than as parts of ourselves. When we procrastinate, parts of our brains actually think that the tasks we're putting off - and the accompanying negative feelings that await us on the other side - are somebody else's problem. Essentially, procrastination is not just a habit but an emotional and psychological response to unwanted feelings.

Now that we have a better understanding of procrastination, let's examine the social narratives that surround it. In response to procrastination, many of us have been told "you're just lazy" or "you just need to learn better time management." While sometimes that may be the case, it can also be a sign of creative processing. Professor of psychology, Dr. Tim Pynch, asserts that "Procrastination isn't a unique character flaw or a mysterious curse on your ability to manage time, but a way of coping with challenging emotions and negative moods induced by certain tasks." This can be anything from boredom, anxiety, frustration, resentment or self-doubt.

In the face of these adverse feelings, one of the best things we can do is practice self compassion. Treating ourselves with kindness and understanding in the face of our mistakes and failure can provide a buffer against negative reactions. In fact, several studies show that self-compassion supports motivation and personal growth. Not only does it decrease psychological distress, which we now know is a primary culprit for procrastination, it also actively boosts motivation and enhances feelings of self-worth.

Finally - I can't put it off any longer - let's discuss how we can work with procrastination, not against it. Chronic procrastination is so common that if you're not affected yourself, chances are that you work with at least one or more procrastinators in your day to day life. So how can we ease the anxiety and discomfort that comes with procrastination?

Unfortunately, we can't just tell ourselves to stop procrastinating. And despite the prevalence of "productivity hacks," focusing on the question of how to get more work done



Is time a procrastinator's worst enemy?

Photo by Sophia Marsolek

doesn't address the root cause of procrastination. The solution doesn't involve learning new strategies for self-control or downloading a time management app. We must find a better reward than avoidance - one that can relieve our challenging feelings in the present moment without causing harm to our future selves.

While procrastination is normally associated with negative consequences such as being stressed out or late, Rory Vaden, author of *Procrastinate on Purpose*, says strategic procrastination is a tool used by the ultra-successful. Steve Jobs procrastinated regularly. Ernest Hemingway often left sentences unfinished; J.R.R. Tolkien painstakingly answered reader questions by mail instead of working on his book. Martin Luther King Jr. didn't start writing his 'I have a dream' speech until the night before - and he was still jotting notes and crossing out lines right before he walked onstage.

There are two main types of procrastinators: passive and active. Passive procrastinators are procrastinators in the traditional sense. Paralyzed by their indecision to act, they fail to complete tasks on time. In contrast, active procrastinators are a "positive" type of procrastinator. They often prefer to work under pressure and make the deliberate decision to procrastinate. Results show that although active procrastinate to the same degree as passive, they are more similar to non procrastinators in terms of purposeful use of time, coping styles, and outcomes including academic performance.

So, with all this in mind, how can we reimagine our relationship with procrastination in a way that will cause less harm? An article published by Princeton University outlines three main steps we can take to better coexist with procrastination. Takeaway number 1: Increase awareness - Reflect on the reasons why you procrastinate, as well as your habits and thoughts that lead to procrastination. Takeaway number 2: Set goals - Focus on what you want to do, not what you want to avoid. Think about the productive reasons for doing a task by setting positive, meaningful learning and achievement goals for yourself. And finally, takeaway number 3: Be Realistic - Achieving goals and changing habits takes time and effort; don't sabotage yourself by having unrealistic expectations and be patient with yourself.

Procrastination is inevitable and affects all of us in one way or another. It is paramount that we understand this habit, and most importantly, work towards a more holistic approach, one that values self-compassion and puts our mental health first. We've defined procrastination and learned about some of the scientific components that contribute to it. We've deconstructed harmful stereotypes, shedding light on the positive aspects to procrastinative behavior. And finally, we established tools any procrastinator can use to succeed.

As I sat there in front of my three sentences, I realized that I was much more stressed than I needed to be. That time crunch adrenaline finally kicked in and three sentences turned into 50. Was it the best essay I'd ever written? No, not at all, but I got it done. Those cookies were delicious, and I'm sure my mom appreciated the clean bathroom, but in hindsight, all those extra tasks were just the monkey in my brain telling me to do what's easy and fun. I know now how to work with my procrastination habits in a healthy way. I believe that if we change the way we think about procrastination, we will all be better for it. And hey, maybe next time I'll only walk the dog once.

Is Traveling Worth the Time and Money?

Evyn Good
Reporter

With spring break rapidly approaching, traveling starts to become a necessity to see friends and family. Due to rising gas prices and the expenses of flying on a plane, people who live on a budget are shifted away from their travel plans and are forced to adapt to break without their loved ones involved. With a ticket from Missoula to New York during the break times costing upwards of \$800, the idea of traveling for many people has become a waste of money and time. But as people feel disjointed and stuck at home, travel is becoming more and more of a necessity, making traveling on a budget a needed part of people's lives and something that everyone should have the opportunity to undertake.

Commuting from home to work or school doesn't count as travel. This kind of travel is integrated into a person's routine, and one of the more important parts of traveling is to have a break from the monotony and see and experience something



A plane ready to start a new adventure.
Photo courtesy of Arjun Bachmann

new. However, traveling by car is still a way to experience a vacation and see loved ones over spring break. This proves to be one of the more cost effective ways to travel, with rising gas prices and the distances that are required to travel, this plan develops several large kinks. The first of these large travel kinks is the time that it takes to travel by car from one place to another. A non stop flight from Missoula to Seattle is 1 hour and 33 minutes. Meanwhile, driving from Missoula to Seattle takes roughly 10 hours. The time is something that can be worked through, however there are still more issues that can arise when driving. Traveling from Missoula to Seattle, drivers encounter three mountain passes. Usually, passing through these mountain passes is not a problem. However in the early spring months, these passes can be dangerous for cars to drive on or be closed entirely due to poor road conditions. This creates yet another hurdle for people hoping to travel during the break.

These kinks are not impossible to get undone, but still develop a large issue for most people on their quest to see the world around them.

The idea of flying, in theory, is very appealing. Being able to buy a ticket, drop off your bags, have them put onto the aircraft for you and then flying at high speeds to your destination, is very appealing. In practice, it is not quite so easy. Buying a ticket is a large hassle and costs a lot of money. The system to drop off your bags is easy but getting your bags back is far from a guarantee as 5% of the 28 million bags handled are lost or mishandled according to The Street. Then there is the issue of going through security, which takes more time than playing a round of golf in the snow. After all of this, flying to your destination is finally complete. Except the flight never took off, as the flight was delayed. According to CNBC, 10,103 flights have been delayed between January 1st and January 11th and 1,343 flights have been canceled. The 2022 holiday season showed the woes of flying as according to CNBC, roughly 12,000 flights were canceled between December 21 and December 23. The hassle involved in flying through the skies and getting to your destination, involves hurdles and hoops to jump through that require not only an incredible amount of money, but an incredible amount of time.

Despite these risks and the amount of money involved in going through the process of traveling, the experience of seeing brand new parts of the world, gives people a chance to grow with the ever changing world. Maizy Miller, a sophomore at Hellgate High School, said traveling has impacted her as a person. "It has definitely given me a lot more idea of what is happening outside of where I live and the cultures that are found around the world."

Izzy Bryant, a senior at Hellgate, shared similar experiences and revelations while traveling. "I definitely think they have, as it changed the way I see time at home and has impacted how I want to spend my time in the future, which will involve traveling abroad and seeing new parts of the world."

Although traveling is a large hassle and requires a lot of money, time and preparation beforehand, it is one of the most important things that a person can do in their life and something that everyone should have the opportunity to do.



A plane seeing Missoula with new eyes.
Photo courtesy of Arjun Bachmann

Consider Your Options: How I Decided On Seattle

Alexander Blaide
Editor

Earlier this year, I wrote about my college application journey and things like filling out CommonApp or FAFSA. In the print version of that article, I included part of my acceptance letter for a college and confidently wrote about my excitement in moving from Missoula to Chicago to study theater. Unfortunately, over the winter break, my mom and I had a very real and important conversation about how even after all the scholarships I was offered and the savings my mom has had in place since I could barely walk, it still wouldn't be enough to cover the almost 30,000 dollars worth of extra costs, including the remainder of my yearly tuition, room and board, and meals. It just couldn't be possible. It was very disappointing to hear, but it was better to hear sooner rather than later.

With my heart set on going to Chicago, I didn't come up with or have a backup plan, effectively starting myself back at square one. I checked out CommonApp again, but felt so demoralized that I couldn't even think of doing more college applications for a while. That was when I got a text from my mom with a suggestion I hadn't considered.

When my mom visited my aunt over New Year's, they apparently started scheming and came up with the idea that after graduation, I could spend a few months or longer in the city and familiarize myself within Seattle's arts world before deciding if I wanted to go to school there, staying with my aunt until I figure out what I'm doing. It's perfect because my aunt lives in downtown Seattle and attends all sorts of plays, concerts, and comedy shows, so she'd know the best places for me to start or introduce myself to.

Other than grunge music from bands like Nirvana or Pearl Jam, I didn't realize how arts-centric the city is. Seattle has an impressive theater community and gorgeous venues that have put on productions of many acclaimed Broadway shows as well as concerts from the Seattle Symphony. According to my aunt, Seattle would be the best place for me to get started with exploring a career in the arts while still being close enough to Missoula. I love the idea and have started planning for that as best as I could because I can see myself enjoying Seattle much more than Chicago. I have been visiting Seattle once or twice a year every year since I was seven

or eight, so I know the city. I know the tourist-y spots, I know their sales tax percentage, and I even know which restaurants use fresh salmon or crab (and avoid the ones that don't). I've said multiple times before that my "home away from home" is Seattle.

The amount of opportunity in a city like Seattle compared to Montana as a whole is insane and is why I'm so appealed to the idea. The population of Seattle is 300,000 less than that of Montana as a whole, which seems like a lot until you realize that the AT&T Stadium that the Dallas Cowboys play in can seat over 100,000 people. Fill that stadium three times, and you've made up the difference in population.

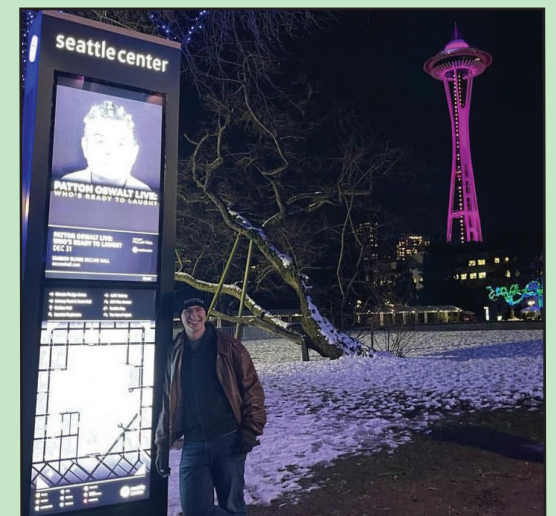
Seattle has launched the careers of several actors and comedians such as Rainn Wilson (Dwight from "The Office"), Jeffrey Dean Morgan (Negan from "The Walking Dead"), and Ryan Stiles ("Whose Line Is It Anyway?"). It also launched the careers of musicians like Jimi Hendrix, Sir-Mix-A-Lot, and Chris Cornell. Originally, part of the appeal of Chicago to me was the amount of opportunity to launch a career outside of Montana, and what I failed to realize was that I wouldn't have to go so far to do that. Seattle is only a 90 minute plane ride or a seven hour drive away from Missoula, and if things didn't work out the way I think they should, it would be very easy to bail out, which I don't plan on doing that because if this city that I've been visiting since I was in third grade was able to launch the careers of people I admire like Rainn Wilson or Ryan Stiles, then there's no reason that it wouldn't work on some kid from Missoula, Montana, right?

I knew that I needed advice on what I could or should do to prepare for such a change. I went to who gave me my first acting opportunity here at Hellgate, Mr. Dean. I figured that if anyone had advice on what to do to pursue a career in the arts, it would be our theater teacher. Speaking with him made me more excited, because not only did I receive excellent advice on things like networking with other people or enjoying the local culture, I learned that he loved the idea of me spending time in Seattle. He even suggested that I stay for longer than the few months or summer that I was originally intending on and making it a full year. The reason for staying for a whole year is so that if I wanted to go to school in Washington State, I would be paying in-state tuition and get a discount of sorts. For example, one school I was looking at in the area is Washington State University. UW has an out of state tuition of \$39,906 and an in-state tuition of

\$12,076. Not only would I get lower tuition if I decided to go to school, but I also spend more time in the city. Sounds like a pretty sweet deal, to be honest.

Thinking back to how I got started in theater and comedy, I was just a kid that everyone told to shut up or "had a voice for the stage," but I didn't do anything with that until high school when I auditioned for my first show "The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow" on a whim. From there, I joined Theater 1 here and just moved up through the ranks of Theater here in Hellgate, working on shows at Hellgate or around Missoula. It wasn't until I played Laurie in "Little Women" (renamed "Finding Jo March") here at Hellgate that I had that moment where I realized I could do acting professionally and it would be a waste to not try to pursue it. Going to Seattle is the perfect way to start that goal of pursuing a career in acting.

Sometimes, things don't work out the way you originally wanted. Sometimes, what you have to do is step back and take a look at your options and what makes the most sense for you. Sometimes, the second best option is the best option and you didn't realize it. Consider every option that is presented to you because you never know if something else is better than what you originally chose.

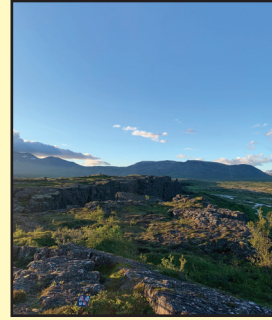


When I went to see Patton Oswalt in Seattle with my aunt.

Photo courtesy of Alexander Blaide

Hellgate Knights

High Hopes at Hellgate

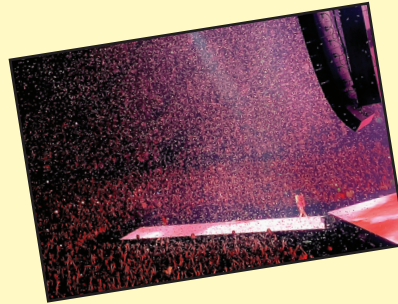


New Year

"I want to do a pull up this year."
-Faith You

"This year I really hope
to go on a fun trip with
my friends."
- Sofi de Pastino

"This year I hope to keep
becoming a better person."
- Faith You



"I'm really looking forward to deciding
what college I'm going to because that's
something I've been looking forward to
for a long time."
-Solvei Waltz

"I am looking forward to exploring
opportunities for my post high
school experience."
- Sofi de Pastino



"I'm hoping to make it
to the gym almost every
day this year."
- Brooks Wachtel



"I'm really
traveling more
this year I
did a few y

Head Into 2023

Knights Know Best

, New Knights

You



“Take every opportunity you get. You don’t know when you’ll have it again” - Solvei Waltz



“I want to continue branching out and making new friends.”
- Solvei Waltz



“It all gets better with time.”
- Brooks Wachtel

coloring
gh-
e Pastino



“Everything happens for a reason.”
- Faith You

“Just do what makes you happy.”
- Sofi de Pastino

ly hoping I get to
e this year like I
ears ago.”
-Lisa Ratz



Art Club: Making Hellgate More Colorful

Devyn Deschamps
Reporter

Fulfilling credits in order to graduate is a priority for Hellgate Knights, so opportunities to take multiple classes within the arts are, for some, unattainable. Cue in the Art Club, where students meet weekly and are able to freely create without the stress of grades.

The club has been a tradition within Hellgate and has always had a strong student backing. With many students being involved in highly competitive activities, the Art Club has the detoxifying aspect of peaceful projects.

Vice President, junior Gemma Ryan describes the group as students who can make independent choices and projects, without the ordinary restrictiveness of a club. “Members often have a lot of free will to take projects in different directions,” said Ryan. Ryan details Art club as having an “exciting atmosphere while also giving our work lots of layers and diversity.”



An Art Club member works on a new project during the meeting. Photo by Devyn Deschamps.

Likewise, second-year President Junior Lillie Lambert, strives on the club being made up of varied personalities. “My favorite part about the club is the wonderful and diverse group of people!” said Lambert.

Member junior Phoebe Dillon recounted joining Art Club as a freshman, saying, “it sounded like a fun way to add more art into my day.”

Art Club has had various events, but Dillon’s favorite was repainting the murals on the third floor. After not being retouched for nearly a decade, last year Art Club took it upon themselves to restore the murals to their past glory.

Ryan and Lambert were more fond of the events this year, such as the creation and ceremonial burning of an entirely student-made paper mache Big Sky High School Eagle, preceding Hellgate’s Homecoming game. Or as Ryan said, “The eagle thrown into the fiery pits of the Hellgate bonfire.”

Ryan also mentioned the recently passed art sale that was held prior to winter break as one of her highlights within the club. “We were

raising money for the art department. We sold pins, totes, tshirts, pencil bags, all made by the Art Club during meetings and two after school meetings,” said Ryan.

During Art Club’s last meeting, Lambert had everyone create hand painted posters to be held in the Upper Gymnasium for support to our Basketball teams. Currently, they are transitioning to creating a trophy for an upcoming lip synching competition.

Beyond trophy-making, more Art Club merchandise sales are potentially on the horizon. Still, the club remains open minded to any activities. “People either come to us in need of some sort of artistic venture..., or we come up with our own projects,” said Ryan. Ryan said that there are potential projects currently in work with S.A.V.E. that could be beginning soon.

In regards to the future in the large scale, Lambert excitedly added that Art Club’s goals for the school are simply “making it a brighter and more colorful place.”



Students paint signs for the upcoming basketball games, such as the KAK sword.
Photo by Devyn Deschamps.



One of Art Club’s more well known projects, repainting the third floor murals. Photo by Devyn Deschamps.

Kanye West's Popularity Comes to Abrupt End

Iris Lowe
Reporter

Kanye West, also known as “Ye”, is an American rapper, songwriter, record producer and fashion designer. He used to be one of the most influential figures in the music industry because of his political involvement and religious thoughts, but recently he has become one of the most controversial rappers in the industry. Beginning in early October, West went on a

on his neck like that.” After this episode of the podcast got released, West’s interview got taken off, but the contents of the interview were heard by George Floyd’s family. According to NPR, on Oct. 18 Roxie Wilson, the mother of George Floyd’s daughter, sued West for 250 million dollars. I believe that West was far out of line when making these comments, they were insensitive towards George Floyd’s family and the lawsuit was a necessary next step.

West also made a series of comments on

biggest business partners cut ties after hearing about the comments. On Oct. 21, one of West’s closest collaborators, Balenciaga, announced that it would no longer be working with him. Following in the footsteps of Balenciaga, on Oct. 25, Adidas and Gap both announced the end of their relations with West.

West has millions of fans across the world, but his recent actions have made many of them question their support. “I’ve been a Kanye fan since day one,” 16-year-old Colter Russel of Hellgate High School said. “I’ve always looked up to him so it’s disappointing hearing all the news about him.”

Another question has arisen after all these events: Do you continue to listen to his music? And can you listen to his music without supporting his actions? It is an issue that many people are divided on, making the “right choice” less and less evident.

“I won’t go out of my way to support him,” said junior Lily Stearns. Stearns, along with many other people, are continuing to listen to his music, only because they enjoy the songs. “I don’t support him as a person, but I don’t know that I will stop listening to his music altogether,” Stearns said.

I agree with Stearns’ take on the situation. I think it’s difficult to cut all ties with him right away, especially if you have been listening to his work for so long. I believe that it is possible to still value an artist’s work without supporting their personal beliefs.

West’s actions have impacted him more than anyone could have foreseen. His comments have ended relations with Balenciaga, Gap, Adidas, Vogue and a multitude of other companies, dropped his networth from 2 billion to 400 million, his talent agency dropped him as a client, and sale and production of his products has stopped. So... is this the end of Kanye?



Many companies dropped Kanye West as a partner after his controversial comments.

spree of public appearances where he made a series of Antisemitic comments as well as false claims about George Floyd’s death.

West said in an interview with Drink Champs, a popular music podcast, that after watching Candance Owens’ George Floyd documentary, he decided, “They hit him with fentanyl, if you look, the guy’s knee wasn’t even

Twitter and in TV interviews that supported Antisemitic conspiracy theories that in the past have spurred hate and violence against Jewish people. These comments sparked widespread criticism and he was locked out of his Instagram and Twitter accounts. In addition to being removed from social media, many of West’s

Avatar 2: Bop or Flop?

Julia Key
Editor

Say What?!

The long-awaited Avatar: The Way of Water came out December 2022 in theaters. It has been 13 years since the first groundbreaking Avatar movie came out. The first movie was a box office hit and revolutionary for CGI animation, so it was no secret that people were gearing up for a second round. Here is what Hellgate students thought about Avatar: The Way of Water.

Harlen Bidwell (freshman)



“It was great, I liked the big whales.”

Eli Hammit (sophomore)



“I really liked it, it was a good sequel to the first movie, it did a good job playing off the first movie, like bringing back characters, and a lot of people said three hours was too long but I thought it was perfect, but most of it was minor character development which really helped, and the quality was also really good, it was like 8k or something.”

Oliver Hansen (Junior)



“I feel like for waiting half my life for that movie, there were a lot of ‘bros’ used, that’s my one complaint.”

Cypress Ewan (Senior)



“To be honest I haven’t seen the first movie in actual years, so I didn’t understand the story basically at all, but the movie was really pretty, it was so good looking.”

Hellgate Basketball Under Fresh and Veteran Faces

Brennan Labbe
Reporter

MISSOULA- Coach Maddie Keast strides to take over Missoula's most effective basketball program in the last 4 years, and Jeffery Hays continues to make his case as one of the most successful high school coaches ever in the state of Montana.

The 2022-23 Hellgate Knights look to wreak havoc on AA basketball competitors this winter. Under a fresh start and continued success. Keast is coming from achievement in Class B basketball, at Loyola Sacred Heart. She coached the Breakers last season as her first official head coach stint, after a year under her former coach Karen Deden, at Missoula Sentinel. On the boys side of the ball, Hays is finishing his first dozen years. Finding some of the most success ever in Montana AA basketball. Hays' resume consists of 10 state appearances, and 2 state championships.

"I have been thinking about this year for what it feels like decades," said senior Connor Dick. "Coach Hays has put hours in myself and this team and we all trust him, and he trusts us."

Dick is in his fourth year at Hellgate. His older sister, Lauren, was one of the many graduates out of the girls team last year. She walked on and is currently on the University of Montana roster.

"We will miss the strong group of seniors (on both teams) from last year," said Dick. "But that being said, we got a ton of younger talent that will continue to develop and be a really solid group in the coming years."

Dick returning as an All State senior helps to heal this Knights team, as they lost six seniors last year, including two college football players and an honorable mention All Conference stud in Dre Bowie. "One

thing that we talk about as a team is that the early season doesn't really matter," said Dick. "Who cares if you start 4-0. We want to be playing our best basketball in March, and we will work until we get there."

Dick is accompanied by sophomore Easton Sant, fellow senior Asher Topp, and Mario Rosemond as the heart of this team.

The girls are led by Chloe Larson and Alix Covill.

"We have a very new team," said Larson. "Keast has created a perfect environment where we are supported, aren't afraid to make mistakes, and push each other everyday."

The girls are battling even tougher circumstances than the boys, by graduating over half a dozen seniors, a few being Keke Davis who attends Montana Western and Bailee Sayler who broke the Knights scoring record last year and attends MSU Billings.

"It's definitely challenging coming back after setting such high standards," said Larson.

The Knights are coming off of an undefeated season, until their loss at State last year. "We have lots of talent, and kids who are really stepping up into big roles. I think everyone's just excited to see what we can do this year," said Larson.

Keast has been working hard these last few years, from building up her credibility to now leading one of the best AA teams in the state. With an

unbelievable track record behind Coach Rob Henthorn, and his son Brady Henthorn, the Knights have built up a program to find much success. With the change this year, Larson expands on how it has molded the team into who they are now, "I love having a female coach. She's understanding and easy to talk to, and she not only puts her energy into the varsity team, but the entire program."

Catch these Knights in action for the entire month of February and early March, as both teams gear up to finish some unbelievable seasons with Division and State runs!



Starters take a break during a timeout in Belgrade. Photo courtesy of Chloe Larson



Keast breaks down a play in a huddle. Photo courtesy of Chloe Larson

Missoula Mammoths Biking Season in Review

Evyn Good
Reporter

The Missoula Mammoths, Missoula's local middle school and high school biking team, has recently had their season come to an end.

However, for two riders, the journey of biking has only just begun. Ellen Davis, a junior at Hellgate, and Elsa Westenfelder a senior at Hellgate, are taking their biking journeys overseas to Europe. Davis and Westenfelder are competing in Kerstperiode in Belgium. However for both of these bikers, their journey started at a smaller scale then competing around the world.

For Davis, this started in 3rd grade when her dad introduced her to the sport. However she did not start taking the sport of bike racing seriously until 8th grade. This is when she got her start on her first biking team, Team Stampede. "At first nothing really inspired me to start biking, my dad did it and just got me into it, and I was not very good at it at all. At the time I was actually a competitive swimmer and didn't think of biking as a competitive sport, just a fun way to have fun outside," said Davis.

However, as she spent more and more time biking, she began to fall in love with the sport. "As I started riding more, I became more confident and liked the challenges that it always provided, whether that be riding a new technical feature or pushing myself super hard

for a race." This allowed Davis to push herself more and continue to bike more and more in her personal life, becoming one of the best youth girl bikers in the United States.

She wishes that all people get the chance to ride but knows the challenges that come with biking. "I feel like cycling can be a very intimidating sport for people who have never done it before and want to try it out. It has this reputation of being a super difficult and rough sport, and also inaccessible because you need a certain bike. However, this is not true. If you want to get into biking, go grab a friend and get out there and ride. There are a lot of places around Missoula that are great for all levels of riders."

If you want to be a part of the team aspect of biking and want to learn more about the sport, there's a solution for that as well. "If someone wants to start racing, join the Missoula Mammoths. The team races from July to October and does 4 to 5 races scattered throughout the state of Montana. The atmosphere and everyone who races is super welcoming and is always looking for any new riders who want to compete."

The Mammoths registration for new riders starts May 2 and they will begin their first event June 8, 2023. The Mammoths compete with other teams from around the state and are looking for more riders to get out there and ride with them.



Ellen Davis and Elsa Westenfelder biking together. Photo Courtesy Ellen Davis



The Missoula Mammoths getting ready to start a race. Photo Courtesy Ellen Davis

Hellgate's Second Girls Invitational Wrestling Tournament

Liz Gray
Reporter

Wrestling is one of the world's oldest sports, dating back close to 5000 years. Though wrestling is a predominantly male sport since 1990 when girls wrestling was introduced at the college level it has gained popularity among girls. It's become increasingly popular in the last 3 years.

In 2021 the Montana High School Association (MHS) held the first ever All-Class girls wrestling state tournament at Lockwood High School in Billings and in 2022 MHS combined both the girls and the boys state tournament for the first time ever.

Not only has the number of girls tournaments increased, but the number of girls on a team has increased drastically, going from two or three girls to the double digits.

Hellgate's wrestling team has witnessed the growth in popularity first-hand, going from one or two girls to having upwards of 10 in the last couple of years.

Due to the rise in popularity and amount of tournaments that are available to girls Hellgate hosted their first ever all girls tournament on Jan. 15, 2022 and had about 120 girls come from all over the state to attend. Due to the high numbers last year, Hellgate decided to bring back the girls tournament

for a second year.

This year's turnout is expected to be anywhere from 130-160 girls.

"I think it's huge that Hellgate is able to host its own girls tournament, it feels like we are a big part of a growing sport."

- Aspen Murphy

Hellgate's head coach John Smith started the tournament "so girls would have a place to compete against girls and not to have to wrestle boys." He's most looking forward to "watching Hellgate's girls wrestle."

Hellgate's Aspen Murphy, a junior who has 6 years of experience wrestling under her belt and placed 3rd in the 113 weight bracket in this tournament last year, was most excited to "hopefully take some wins in our own house and to represent Hellgate."

"I think it's huge that Hellgate is able to host its own girls tournament, it feels like we are a big part of a growing

sport," Murphy said.

Kaylee Barber, another junior who also has 6 years of wrestling under her belt was "looking forward to placing and having fun."

"I think it's a very important thing that we have our own team because we have more opportunities to wrestle in our weight classes and have more fun wrestling our own gender," Barber said.

Lucy Andrew, one of the only seniors on the team this year with two years of wrestling experience, was "excited to see how many girls are going to show up this year. There's not a lot of girls tournaments and it's good to see that Hellgate is helping to lead the way in more girls tournaments and hopefully it'll inspire more girls to wrestle."



Shootin' for the Stars: 2023 Golden G.O.A.T.

By Devyn Deschamps

Advice & Reminders:

Buy Shirts! We are graded on having our student body, parents, guardians, and guests wearing our G.O.A.T. shirts!

Show up! This is the most vital part of the game - having a student section that is completely filled.

Stay hydrated before, during, and after the game. The gym gets hot amongst the hundreds of students. Be prepared.

We are judged on our sportsmanship and our cheers! Our student section needs to be united, but we can't insult the other team without being penalized.

Dress to the theme: Shootin' for the Stars! Dress like a planet, a star, or an astronaut. Do not dress like an alien/ Star Wars. Don't forget to wear red and gold too!

What to look forward to:



Student section erupting after 2022 Golden G.O.A.T. win. Photo by Ila Bell.



The Adams Center during the 2022 game. Photo courtesy of Chloe Caldwell.



Students at the 2022 pregame festivities. Photo courtesy of Chloe Caldwell.

2023 G.O.A.T. Shirt

