

# the BULLDOG BARKER

Williams Bay High School • 500 W. Geneva St. • Williams Bay, WI 53191

## Groundhog Day: What is it and is it Accurate?

By Derek Johnson

Every February 2nd, the U.S. takes part in a strange tradition, Groundhog Day, in which we conclude what the weather will be like in the near future. At around 7:15 am, the groundhog will emerge from hibernation and predict whether winter will deliver more cold weather. If the groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, sees his shadow, he will return back to his den in hibernation, meaning that colder weather is expected to continue for another six weeks. If he doesn't see his shadow, that means generally warmer weather is to come. While this method isn't completely foolproof, it sure is a fun tradition.

Since the late 1800s, Punxsutawney Phil has predicted 109 continued winters and only 21 early springs (as of 2025). Comparing these predictions to the actual weather data, "according to the Stormfax Almanac, it works out to a 39% accuracy rate for Phil" (Barker). On a statistical standpoint, every year Punxsutawney Phil has a 50% chance of making the correct prediction. While this may showcase him as a below average weather forecaster, we have to remember the fact that Phil is only a groundhog, making his 39% success rate much more impressive.

Sources:

Barker, Aaron. "How Accurate Is Punxsutawney Phil?" FOX Weather, 31 Jan. 2022, [www.foxweather.com/learn/how-accurate-is-punxsutawney-phil-really](http://www.foxweather.com/learn/how-accurate-is-punxsutawney-phil-really).  
Winick, Stephen. "Groundhog Day: Ancient Origins of a Modern Celebration | Folklife Today." Blogs.loc.gov, 1 Feb. 2022, [blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2022/02/groundhog-day-ancient-origins-of-a-modern-celebration/](https://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2022/02/groundhog-day-ancient-origins-of-a-modern-celebration/).

## The Disappearance of Final Exams

By Sophia Count

Final exams are very stressful for everyone. The late-night study sessions, taking pages and pages of notes, creating flashcards, and taking in so much knowledge at the last minute can be stressful. However, all of those stressors disappeared along with final exams. Many were surprised by the loss of final exams and questioned this loss without an answer. But what are students and admin saying about the disappearance of final exams?

Students have wondered why finals are gone. Some are concerned while others are relieved. However, many students have said they are curious about how this will benefit them, especially those who want to go to college. There were numerous pieces of feedback amongst the student body as to what they think about exams. As mentioned before, some students are relieved to not have exams anymore. It lifts all the stress and worries that many students have during finals week. When reflecting on finals week, one student said "It was just 'study, study, study' and I felt relieved when I was finished." Without having exams, it causes students to focus more in class since their summatives are worth more, and they work harder to remember their course content. Exams are difficult for some students because they memorize material for the test and not for long-term knowledge retention. This isn't beneficial for neither students nor teachers.

While some students are happy, others are concerned as to how the lack of exams will impact them when they get to college. They are worried that since they are losing the test-taking experience, they won't do well on college tests/exams. However, when students get to college, they won't have seven or eight exams to study for. If anything, they will have a maximum of three or four. To wrap up the semester, professors may even assign a project or essay instead of a test. This would place some stress on students during exam week, but it may not be as much as students think.

Ms. Soley-Johnson and Mr. Welch had interesting feedback when they were asked questions about not having final exams. They highlighted how students benefit from more instructional time, and how teachers don't have the stress of grading finals. When prepping for finals, students can lose up to ten days of instructional time. Instead, teachers can keep their classes going. They don't have to worry about their assessments, or how they conflict with when finals are. Another intent of the decision was to shift students' grades to primarily reflect their learning on summative assessments. Teachers should be spiraling back to what they have been teaching as a way to keep the material in students' long-term memory. Exams can tell teachers what students retain; however, summative assessments throughout the units can do the same, and students can look back on their tests.

In summary, eliminating final exams takes away a high-stress environment and reduces the impacts it can have on mental health. Both Ms. Soley-Johnson and Mr. Welch are confident in the benefits of no exams for both students and teachers.

# History of St. Patrick’s Day

## By Quinn Peyer

St. Patrick’s Day is a celebration that happens every year on the 17th of March in most of the world. It is celebrated with food, drinks, and parades. Chicago even dyes their river an emerald green to celebrate the day!

Saint Patrick or Maewyn Succat was from Britain but was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave at sixteen. After he escaped slavery, he returned home to his family in Britain. This is where he studied to be a priest. He later returned to Ireland to teach Irish people about God and Christianity, which is why it’s considered a religious holiday. It is celebrated around the world because of Irish immigrants spreading their traditions.

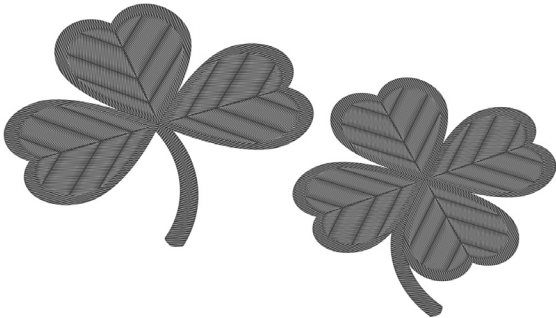
Saint Patrick died on March 17th, which is why the holiday is celebrated when it is. The most well-known legend from Saint Patrick is how he taught people about the holy trinity using a three leaf clover, the shamrock.

Leprechauns are very important to St. Patrick's Day, as they were mischievous fairies that brought the first gold to Ireland. Leprechauns love gold, rainbows, shamrocks, and especially the color green. The legend tells us you can find them at the end of a rainbow and if you capture it, it will grant you three wishes or his pot of gold.

Sources:

St. Patrick's Day: Origins, Meaning & Background | HISTORY, 27 October 2009, <https://www.history.com/topics/st-patricks-day/history-of-st-patricks-day>. Accessed 13 February 2025.

Guerzon, Tiffany Doerr. “Leprechaun Treats, Tricks and Traps for St. Patrick's Day.” ParentMap, 7 March 2024, <https://www.parentmap.com/article/leprechaun-treats-tricks-and-traps-for-st-patricks-day>. Accessed 14 February 2025.



## The 2025 spring season is beginning. Here are some of the sports Williams Bay/Big Foot offer.

- Girls Soccer
- Baseball
- Boys Golf
- Boys Lacrosse
- Softball
- Boys Tennis
- Track
- Boy and Girls MS Track

Make sure to talk to Mr. Johnson if you are interested in any of these upcoming spring sports!

**\*Admin asks that students scan the QR code to complete the “End of the Semester” survey.\***



# LiAngelo Ball’s Resurface

## By Doug Barouski

The NBA is one of the most prestigious and difficult organizations to get into. Thousands of kids, teens, and even adults dream of being in the NBA to play in front of millions. One kid, LiAngelo Ball, Lavar Ball’s son, was one of those who tried and failed. However, his brothers, Lamelo and Lonzo Ball, are both starting point guards for their respective team in the NBA. In high school, LiAngelo played for the Chino Hills Huskies, one of the best high school basketball teams at the time. He played alongside his brothers in 2015-2016 where they went 35-0 and won their State Championship. Following this performance, LiAngelo started his freshman season at UCLA, where his career was cut short when he stole sunglasses from a store in China while visiting for an exhibition game. He was then suspended from his college team and made the decision to forgo playing college basketball entirely.

Despite the history, LiAngelo Ball is living lavishly and is going viral after recently making a viral song titled “Tweaker.” This song features LiAngelo Ball rapping over an early 2000’s beat under the stage name G3. This song sealed a deal of \$13 million dollars with Def Jam and Universal Music Group. His song is easily identifiable after hearing the lyrics: “I might swerve, bend that corner, WOOOAAHH.”

While the future of his music career is unknown, a lot of big rappers like Lil’ Wayne and influencers like PlaqueBoyMax have advocated for his career and sense the potential that he possesses. While basketball didn’t work out the way he liked, his music career seems to just be getting started, showing that he definitely has the aptitude to be one of the greats.

## Monday, March 24-Monday, March 31.





# A Trailblazer’s Dream (a fictional piece)

By Jaylee Carr

A revolution is brewing in the lakeside village of Williams Bay. The Williams Bay Pickleball Team, led by track star Mrs. Sara Terrill, has been dominating courts across the midwest, with the ambitious goal of opening for the National Pickleball Tournament in 2026. From humble beginnings, this modest group transformed into an unstoppable machine with its thunderous spirit and triumphant volleys.

## The Birth of a Dynasty

It was 2022 when Mrs. Terrill first took the paddle into her hands. As a high school English teacher with a passion for the crosscourt, Terrill was introduced to the sport by her favorite students: “It was love at first serve,” she says, reminiscing about that pivotal moment. “The game was fast-paced, full of energy, and kept me active, but what I truly loved was the community it built.”

And so, in the fall of 2023, the Williams Bay High School Pickleball Team was born. Initially, it was a group of a dozen or so juniors, rallying in two humble courts by the lake. But under Terrill’s leadership, that number exponentially grew: students were lining up outside her classroom to register. By the end of 2023, the club boasted thirty-five members, and in the span of just one year, they won the conference championship. People of all ages—retirees, young professionals, and families—found sanctity in their drop shots.

But it wasn’t the sheer numbers that made the Williams Bay Pickleball Team remarkable. It was the club’s competitive spirit that delivered them to the regional pickleball tournament in March, where they became the staple of the esteemed Pickleball Magazine—the official publication of USA Pickleball and the world’s only publication for the sport. In it, Terrill was excited to share how she manages her group: “Just like glitter, our energy shines brightest when we work together. Every shot you take, every rally you play, is a chance to leave a mark of brilliance on the court. Remember, no matter how tough the game gets, your passion and spark can never be dimmed. Play with heart, sparkle with every swing, and let your spirit shine brighter than ever. The court is yours—go out there and dazzle like only we can!”

## The Vision

Coach Terrill had one goal from the very beginning: to elevate Williams Bay to the national stage. Through a combination of strategic training, tactical innovations, and a bit of good old-fashioned grit, she transformed her club into a powerhouse that attracted elite coaches from around the country, earning the nickname “The Mitochondria of Pickleball.”

One of the club’s crowning achievements came later in 2023 when they won The Golden Paddle Award—a feat that no one could’ve predicted. After their win, professional Coach Viola Fischer commented, “The talent in Williams Bay is incredible. I’ve never seen such young players more dedicated to the paddle; there is truly something unique about the chemistry in Williams Bay. It’s a tight-knit community that makes every match feel like a family matter, and I’m all for it.”

Yet it wasn’t just their victories on the court that set them apart. The team had begun to redefine what it meant to be an elite sports organization. With their exceptional sportsmanship, charitable donations, and commitment to health, the club has woven itself into the very fabric of the town.

In early 2024, the club launched the “Pickleball For All” initiative, a program that aimed at providing free practice equipment and local events for the elderly community at the Sherwood Lodge Assisted Living Center. To date, they have donated over 1,000 different sporting items and visited the center monthly, allowing the seniors and their families to experience the joys of activity and pickleball. This program has also sparked a community-wide interest in pickleball, leading to the creation of after-school programs, youth leagues, and beginner clubs that have been embraced by the students of the surrounding schools and hundreds of families.

## The Future: No Dinking Around

But Coach Terrill is not one to rest on her laurels: “The real goal,” she says, “is to build a legacy, not just of victories, but of impact.” Her next project? A forever-national pickleball team based right here in Williams Bay—a team that will serve as a beacon for talent and passion across the world. Already, we’ve seen the team steadily rise through the ranks, but nothing screams the best like being remembered. That is why, the Williams Bay Pickleball Team will not stop at the International Pickleball League, the Pickleball’s Brightest Tournament, or even the Olympics: “We will stop when we’re not just a club, we’re a movement. And the world is watching.”

Despite its beauty, the town of Williams Bay has remained under the radar when it comes to major athletic endeavors or exotic sports. But what if Williams Bay could transform itself into an epicenter for a rapidly growing sport—pickleball? Starting a pickleball club in Williams Bay might begin as simply as a few members, but with the right planning and leadership, it could quickly snowball into something far bigger. Perhaps creating a professional pickleball team at our school is bold, but a growing interest is all it takes to start, and who knows, all of these accomplishments could be made a reality.

Whether the club is passionate about winning and going national, or just something for those who enjoy the game, there isn’t anything to lose from creating the Williams Bay Pickleball Team. Some students have expressed an interest in a pickleball/badminton team here at Williams Bay, so if your interest is piqued, I encourage you to advocate for the club or talk to Mrs. Terrill if you have any questions. Go Paddledogs!

## Opportunities for Spring Sports

By Sarena Brown

Are you signed up for a spring sport yet? Many benefits come with playing sports, such as developing physical skills, mental toughness, and learning time management. Williams Bay offers many spring sports but most are co-op. Co-op means that it is combined with our school and another one. Most are through Big Foot High School, but some others are with Badger High School and Elkhorn Area High School. Many of these sports are looking for additional athletes to join their programs. The sports offered at only Williams Bay High School are softball, baseball, and golf. There is currently only a varsity team for softball and baseball due to lack of members, so if you are interested, let Mr. Johnson know ASAP. The sports offered by Big Foot are girls soccer, boys tennis, and track & field. All of the Big Foot sports offer a JV team and a varsity team. The sport offered by Elkhorn is boys lacrosse. If there is a spring sport that you are interested in but it is not listed, try talking to Mr. Johnson to see if there is an available option.

Now for middle schoolers, the options are a little different. They are able to join middle school volleyball which is available for both boys and girls. This is coached by Ms. Majercik and others. The other option for middle schoolers is track & field, and this sport is always looking for new members, so if you are interested, let Mrs. Terrill know. Unlike high school track & field, in middle school, it is not co-op which means that it is only Williams Bay school members. Every sport is in need of additional members, so don't be shy to try something new.

## The Official Reopening of Daddy Maxwell's

By Maisie Smith

On December 27, 2024, Daddy Maxwell's in Williams Bay officially re-opened their doors to the public. The beloved restaurant is back! In 2021, the diner was forced to close due to the previous owner's passing. The new owners purchased the restaurant in hopes that someone would rent it out and reopen it as the iconic Daddy Maxwell's. The first renter, however, opened the restaurant as "Gracie's Kitchen." Gracie's Kitchen was known for its lunch and dinner menu. This restaurant was not as popular, though, and had to close. (They have a new location in Genoa City.) After this event, Daniel Smith and Miguel were determined to reopen Daddy Maxwell's and bring it back to life. With hard work and the dedication of family members, they successfully restored the restaurant to its authentic self. The new renters then went through the challenging process of finding workers. With the renter's family stepping in to help on opening week, they were able to make it work and opened their doors to the public. Although they were trying to do what's called a "soft opening," the word got out and it became known to the community. Now, the restaurant is facing many customers daily and the locals are happier than ever. Daddy Maxwell's is back and hopefully for good.

## The Benefits of Attending a Small School

By Lilly Robbins

Some students may argue that attending a bigger school is better than attending a small school because the options are limited at a smaller school. I would say that attending a small school can offer numerous advantages that enhance the educational experience. One of the most significant benefits is the personalized attention students receive from teachers. In smaller classrooms, educators can focus on individual student's needs, allowing for tailored instruction that can lead to better understanding and retention of material. This close-knit environment fosters stronger relationships between students and teachers, creating a supportive atmosphere that encourages learning.

Another benefit of small schools is the sense of community they provide. Students often feel more connected to their peers and faculty, which can lead to lasting friendships and a more enjoyable school experience. This sense of belonging can boost students' confidence and motivation, as they feel valued and recognized within their school community.

Finally, smaller schools can promote a more collaborative learning environment. With fewer students, there is often more opportunity for group work and discussions, enabling students to engage with each other and learn from different perspectives. This collaborative spirit can enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills, preparing students for future challenges in both academic and real-world settings.

Overall, the benefits of attending a small school can lead to a more enriching and fulfilling educational journey which I have experienced at the Bay.

## The Language of Flowers

By Avery Kimmerly

For most people, flowers are a sign of beauty, vitality, and care. Freshly bloomed, they have the ability to make people smile, and they can revive their surroundings with a heavenly fragrance. However, the lesser known reality is that flowers can mean so much more than a kind gesture.

Flowers have had great symbolic significance in cultures all over the world for centuries, but their significance skyrocketed during the Victorian era. In the Victorian era, the language of flowers became a popular pastime; a copy of flower languages and books on their symbolism would often take a spot next to the beloved family Bible. Some would call the Victorian obsession with flowers absurd, but to them it was basic etiquette. Shockingly, even the way flowers were delivered could matter: giving flowers from the left hand could mean "no;" whereas, delivering flowers from the right hand could mean "yes." The subtle connotations of the flowers and the actions surrounding the exchange of flowers could dictate the ethics of a person, how polite they were, and it could decide how relevant a person was within Victorian society.



Flowers (continued)

While this secret language is no longer relevant, it remains to be a fascinating artifact in communication and symbolism.

Below are some common flowers and their associated symbolisms/meanings:

Flower Type	Meaning
Baby’s Breath	everlasting love
Calla Lily	beauty
carnation	fascination, female love, mother’s love <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>red - aching, deep love</li><li>white - innocence, pure/sweet love</li><li>pink - the inability to forget someone</li><li>striped - refusal</li><li>yellow - disdain, disappointment, rejection</li></ul>
Chrysanthemum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>red - “I love you”</li><li>yellow - slighted love</li><li>white - truth</li></ul>
Daffodil	regard, unequaled love
Dahlia	good taste
Forget-Me-Not	loving memories
Gardenia	“you’re lovely;” secret love
Hibiscus	delicate beauty
Hyacinth	sport, game, play <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>blue - constancy</li><li>purple - sorrow</li><li>yellow - jealousy</li><li>white - prayers for someone</li></ul>
Hydrangea	gratitude
Iris	faith, hope, trust, valor, wisdom
Lavender	distrust
Lilac	joy of youth
Lily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>white - purity, heavenly</li><li>yellow - happy, walking on air</li><li>orange - hatred</li><li>tiger - wealth, pride</li></ul>
Lily-of-the-Valley	sweetness, humility, tears of the Virgin Mary
Magnolia	nobility, love of nature
Marigold	grief, jealousy
Peony	bashful, happy life, shame
Poppy	consolation
Rose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>red - love</li><li>dark crimson - mourning</li><li>pink - happiness</li><li>white - innocence, worthiness</li><li>yellow - jealousy, decreasing love, infidelity</li></ul>
Tulip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>red - passion, declaration of love</li><li>yellow - “sunshine in your smile”</li></ul>

The number of flowers can dictate meaning as well. Here is a guide as to how the number of roses gifted may affect their meaning:

- one rose**=love at first sight
- three roses**=standard gift for a one-month anniversary
- six roses**=giver is infatuated with receiver and wants the receiver to be “theirs”
- twelve roses**= classic bouquet for asking someone to be “yours”
- fifteen roses**= used to apologize

While the secret meanings behind flowers may not be applicable in modern day, it could be fun to discover the different meanings behind a bouquet or gesture. As Valentine’s Day has passed, this leaves many to wonder: “What kind of messages am I sending?”

# The Negatives of Screen Time

## By Avery Tyshenko

Has looking at a screen ever impacted you negatively? There are many different downfalls of the overuse of screen time which include eye strain, addiction, and sleep disruption. Eye strain occurs after staring at a screen for a long time, so the eyes start to hurt and are tired from the bright lights. Truly, eye strain can lead to headaches and bad vision as time progresses. To reduce this eye strain, it is important to take designated breaks: “Try the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds” (Eye Strain).

Another way to reduce the strain could be to wear blue light glasses that reduce the blue light reaching the eyes. Blue light is the light that the human eye can see which leads to this constant eye strain. Many people will find themselves scrolling for hours on end. Without a doubt, numerous people may not even realize they are addicted to their electronic devices. They may finally realize when they have to leave their phones in the pouches at school and want to go on them.

Lastly, being on the phone right before bed can interfere with the ability to fall asleep. However, studies show that “70 percent of their children check their phones within 30 minutes of falling asleep” (Johnson). As a person’s body tries to go to sleep, melatonin is released; however, the blue light from the screens stops melatonin from being released. This can leave a person feeling wide awake and wanting to watch their favorite show on their phone all night. Therefore, the next day is a struggle to stay awake. Moreover, the overuse of screens can leave a person with many negative effects that can cause many health issues.

Next time you think spending excessive time in front of a screen seems like a fabulous idea, please think twice about the negative effects of electronic devices: disrupting our future society and jeopardizing personal health.

**Sources:**

“Eye Strain - Diagnosis and treatment.” Mayo Clinic, 2 July 2024, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/eyestrain/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20372403>. Accessed 14 February 2025.

Johnson, Sydney. “Almost a third of teenagers sleep with their phones, survey finds.” Ed Source, 28 May 2019, <https://edsource.org/2019/almost-a-third-of-teenagers-sleep-with-their-phones-survey-finds/612995>. Accessed 12 February 2025.

# Finn’s Album Review

By Finn Goodman

Today, I will be reviewing an album that is a personal favorite of mine. This is the second studio album by the band Oasis and it is also widely regarded as one of their best works. *What’s The Story Morning Glory* was released on October 2, 1995 by Creation Records, and it was produced by the group’s lead guitarist and chief songwriter Noel Gallagher. This is a hard rock album by one of the best bands to ever walk the earth and Noel Gallagher truly put himself to the test with this album. Inspired by his love of Irish pub music and The Beatles, Gallagher set out to write this absolutely stacked album. Even though he says that he doesn’t like the almost too distorted tone of the album, many fans regard it as one of Gallagher’s best works. This album and the band’s first album *Definitely Maybe* (which is another 10/10 album by the band) showcase the power they had on the late 1990s punk rock scene. From the hard rock songs like “Morning Glory,” to the soft acoustics found in “Wonderwall,” this album shows off the genius of Gallagher.

I rate this album a 10/10 because of the overall working within the album. The lyrics to the many different instruments found on the tracks showcase the musical genius found within the band and how they each bring a different idea to light.

# The Daytona 500

By Braden Hayes

The Daytona 500 is NASCAR’s biggest racing event. Hosted at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Florida, this 2.5 mile superspeedway is a beast. Marking the beginning of the season, drivers and teams compete in this 200 lap, or 500 mile “super bowl” of NASCAR.

During the early years of NASCAR, racing in Daytona Beach actually occurred on the beach! It all started in 1902 when locals started organizing races along the sand. It quickly gained popularity. By 1948, NASCAR held its first official race there. But eventually, the race outgrew the beach and was moved to Daytona International Speedway. February 22, 1959, marked the first ever Daytona 500. The 500 quickly became an icon to race fans. Over 100,000 fans gather every year to watch and celebrate the sport.

This year's Daytona 500 kicked off February 16th at 12:30 pm, but was quickly delayed, after only 11 laps due to inclement weather. But after quite a lengthy delay, the race finally resumed. Drivers hit the track later that night for the second time that day and pushed their cars to their limits. A final-lap wreck at the front of the field made way for William Byron, 2024’s Daytona 500 winner, to take the lead and score his second Daytona 500 win. Byron became one of the few drivers to ever win back to back Daytona 500s.

# Williams Bay Basketball Team

## Playoffs Hopes

By Gavin Weber

The Williams Bay boys basketball team, currently sitting at 5-15, is looking to make a push in the playoffs. With the regular season coming to an end, the playoffs are just around the corner. Although the Bulldogs haven't had quite the season they were hoping for, they are looking to change that in the coming weeks. The season was filled with its ups and downs, but when the Bulldogs are playing their best, they’re hard to beat.

Being a smaller team, the Bulldogs have had to adjust their playing style, utilizing their knockdown shooters and gritty mindset. The starting lineup consists of Diego Valdez, Keegan Wehrwein, Jack Schultz, Quinn Peyer, and Antonio Perez. The bench is also loaded with talent and playmakers, including Emmett Henry, Carmine Robbins, Jacob Haynes, Samuel Normington-Slay, Ethan Welsh, and Finn Pecht.

Quinn Peyer stated, “We have a chance to be a Cinderella.” Quinn believes in the team's fundamentals, shooting, and hustle to make a run in playoffs.

The whole team is buying in and they are ready to put the conference on notice. This team has a great chance of pulling off an upset at this year’s playoffs.

# Why There is an Insurmountable Amount Evidence That Birds Are Not Real

(a fictional article)

By Michael Pecht

In a world full of microphones and cameras, people are dangerously dismissive of the most prevalent way in which the government is spying on us: birds. It has been a long-known fact that birds, which were once real, have been replaced by government-issued drones that are used to spy on the American public. The revelation first caught traction in the 1950s, when the U.S. government began an ambitious plan to replace all birds within the nation with surveillance drones. The idea was to create the perfect method for surveillance; it needed to be small, discreet, and nationwide. Many animal candidates were considered to make sure they found the best one for government surveillance; ultimately, they landed on birds. Between their incredibly useful ability to fly, as well as their ability to blend into any environment, they were the perfect choice. Utilizing the most cutting-edge technology of the time, the government “allegedly” began to replace real birds with mechanical replicas that are indistinguishable from the real birds. The government declared that the operation was a complete failure, but the people know that this was a lie that the government told to keep people from the truth. After this, all birds from pigeons to eagles, were substituted with a drone that could gather information, track citizens, and report back to government agencies.



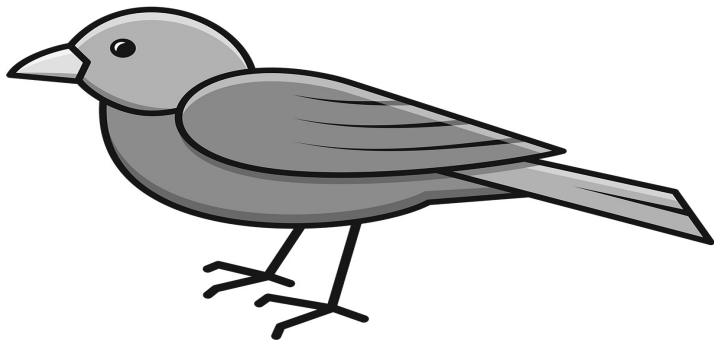
Birds (continued)

Of course there are critics of this theory, those who claim that the "Birds Aren't Real" movement is simply a product of misinformation in America and is built on a misunderstanding of science. Some scientists even try to claim that birds play crucial roles in ecosystems such as predators, pollinators, and scavengers. But this is all a lie fabricated by the American government who fund these scientists to push their dictator agendas. Despite the pushback from these “bird realists,” the movement continues to grow, fueled by an underlying sense of distrust toward government institutions and the feeling of over-expanded surveillance.

One of the main points that these “bird realists” use to argue against the “Birds Aren’t Real” movement, is that they are constantly seen perched on power lines and would short circuit if they were, in fact, robots. This thinking would make sense if not for the fact that these power lines are actually one of the two ways that these “birds” are able to constantly stay active. By using the high voltages of the power lines, the birds are able to recharge their batteries. The other way is through bird migration, where the birds from colder climates fly south every winter, to their CIA outpost in Birmingham, Alabama, where their batteries are replaced and refreshed with the newest models. Equipped with a fully-charged battery aids in their long-standing mission to spy on all of America, and possibly the world.

Along with all of the pushback from the American government, one of the biggest problems that the movement faces is making their presence known, and one of the most impactful ways that the “Birds Aren't Real” movement has been able to spread its beliefs is through social media. With the help of these social media apps, memes, hashtags, and even protests have been created and organized to support and bring attention to the movement. During these protests, large groups of people can be seen wearing T-shirts proclaiming the slogan “Birds Aren't Real.” The main goal of these protests is to call out for government transparency about the truth about birds and spark debates about the ethics of surveillance, privacy, and the use of technology in everyday life.

Overall, there is undeniable evidence proving that birds are in fact not real, but unfortunately, this will probably never be fully accepted by the public because of the brainwashing the American government has imposed upon its citizens. So, next time you see a bird, just remember, if it flies it spies.



# The Dangers of PFAS

By Allie Wickersham

“PFAS are found in hundreds of household items. The chemicals are used to make carpets and clothes stain-resistant. They keep food from sticking to pans and food packaging, and they’re good at keeping grease and water from soaking through” (Christensen).

Almost every day the average person comes in contact with PFAS. It's one of the many chemicals that can cause harm to the environment. As it continues to be harmful, it is important to be aware of how long-lasting it is: “PFAS dissolve in water, and their chemical properties make them difficult to remove from water systems using traditional filtration methods. The result is that many municipal water systems cannot effectively remove PFAS from drinking water using traditional filtration methods, exposing humans and animals to these contaminants” (Pfas). People are exposed to these chemicals in their tap water because it takes years to break down. Animals are also exposed through the lakes and rivers where runoff of PFAS can be found. Although limited research has been done, PFAS can be very harmful to the human body: “Current peer-reviewed scientific studies have shown that exposure to certain levels of PFAS may lead to...Reduced ability of the body’s immune system to fight infections, Interference with the body’s natural hormones, Increased cholesterol level” (Current). These side effects could be crucial for humans in the future. Although they may adopt the chemicals now, in the future who knows what kinds of problems could happen because of PFAS?

PFAS is an environmental problem that is yet to be solved because it's so expensive. In order for families to properly get rid of PFAS in their homes, they would need to get a reverse osmosis filtering system. It is best for individuals to use a water filter, as well as keep up with local water information including “looking at your local utility website to get its most recent water report. Utilities will disclose what’s in the water and what they are doing to reduce contaminants” (Christensen). Water companies share this information to help residents know what is truly in their water. There are federal rules and regulations to regulate water to make sure that the water is at the right limits for PFAS.

All and all, the dangers of PFAS shouldn’t be taken lightly when looking at the future. The effects that it has not only on the human body but on the environment are fearful.

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# Forensics Team

## By Lindsey Dobbertin

### What is Forensics?

The Forensics team at Williams Bay is a group of students who are passionate about speaking, performing, and competing. Whether it's delivering a dramatic monologue or debating a tough topic, the team takes on many different events and pushes themselves to improve each time. At the conference meet, the team consisted of fourteen members who participated in a variety of categories: Finn Goodman, Finn Pecht, Avery Kimmerly, Jaylee Carr, Giada Matus, Lindsey Dobbertin, Connor Lindloff, Nick Agnos, Will Sorenson, Sarena Brown, Lauren Schnobel, Gracie Pils, Jayden Cook, and Bayleigh Kozak.. Being part of Forensics allows participants to build public speaking skills and gain valuable experience

### How does it work?

Although many people are hesitant to join the team, Forensics is quite fun and may not be as nerve-wracking as one would expect. The team participates in four meets throughout the season: Conference, Sub-District, District, and State. The first event, Conference, is often seen as a “practice meet.” Performance at the Conference does not affect whether or not a speaker moves on to state and allows team members to get a feel of what the meets will look like in the future. After the team arrives, there are usually about thirty minutes to relax and practice pieces one last time. The team is given information to guide speakers to the various rooms for the three rounds of competition. Every meet has three rounds, and competitors are adjudicated by three different judges. Each round consists of 5-10 other people from the category and a judge. Each participant takes turns presenting while the judge fills out a scoring sheet. Sometimes there is a brief break between rounds. At the conclusion of the third round, the team converges in a common area and awaits the scoring sheets. The score-sheet is out of twenty-five points and consists of five categories of criteria that vary according to the category. Ribbons are awarded, as well as the conference championship distinction.

The next meet WBHS participates in is Sub-District. In order to move on to the district level, students must earn two scores of 16 or higher. Those who didn’t progress to District are done for the season. At District, participants must earn two scores of 21 or higher to move on to State. The State meet is unique because there is one round. Pins are awarded at State:

- **Gold:** 25 points
- **Silver:** 23-24 points
- **Bronze:** 20-22 points
- **Achievement:** 5-19 points

While there are a variety of categories to choose from, thirteen students at WBHS competed in a few of them at the sub-district meet:

#### ***Impromptu:***

Nick Anagnos, Finn Pecht, Will Sorensen

#### ***Prose:***

Avery Kimmerly

#### ***Oratory:***

Lauren Schnobel, Jaylee Carr

#### ***Demo:***

Finn Goodman

#### ***Poetry:***

Gracie Pils, Bayleigh Kozak

#### ***Storytelling:***

Giada Matus

#### ***Expository:***

Sarena Brown, Lindsey Dobbertin

#### ***Public Address:***

Connor Lindloff

# Nuclear Power Plants

## By Lauren Schnobel

As global warming continues to rise due to the constant use of fossil energy (oil, coal, natural gas), so does the conversation of alternate power sources. Alternate sources of energy include solar, hydro, wind, and—the focus of this article—nuclear. Nuclear power plants offer clean, safe, and efficient energy. They play a big role in the solution to the ongoing issues of climate change.

### How do nuclear power plants work?

1. Fuel assemblies made of uranium are loaded into the reactors: “A fuel assembly, usually several metres long, can spend years in a reactor, generating immense amounts of low-carbon electricity” (Essentials).
2. This starts a chain reaction of splitting uranium atoms—called nuclear fission—which emits heat.
3. Pressurized water is heated and turns to steam.
4. The steam spins a turbine which connects to an electric generator.
5. The generator creates electricity.
6. After the steam leaves the turbine, it is condensed and cycles back, creating an ongoing cycle.

### The Benefits of Using Nuclear Power

Nuclear power is far cleaner than power from coal or oil since nuclear power plants alone do not emit greenhouse gases. In the process of mining the uranium, some greenhouse gases are released, but not nearly as much as what is released in the process of obtaining fossil fuel energy. Instead of greenhouse gas, the plants emit clouds of steam and small amounts of radioactive gases (nothing our bodies are not already used to). Additionally, although this energy resource is not renewable, it is extremely efficient: a single gram of uranium can power over 700 households for one day.

### What’s wrong with our current methods?

One of the two biggest issues with fossil fuels is that they produce a surplus amount of carbon emissions. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas which traps heat to warm the planet. If too much of this greenhouse gas is released, the atmosphere will continue to trap more and more of the sun’s heat, which is what creates global warming.

The other issue with fossil fuels is they aren’t going to last forever. Fossil fuels are made from the heat and pressure of the earth as organisms decompose over millions of years. The decomposed matter then turns into coal, natural gas, and oil which is extracted from drilling into earth (Lorenz). Of course, fossils are limited, and we will run out eventually. According to Nicholas Schnobel, UW-Madison Electrical Engineering student, we must “start building a more sustainable and diversified energy economy with nuclear power at the center.”

There will be a day when fossil energy is not an option, and when this day comes, we must be prepared.

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