

VOLUME  
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# The John Adams Tower

ISSUE  
ONE

75th Anniversary

AUGUST 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2015

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## SPORTS GPA REQUIREMENT CHANGED

MARIAH RUSH • News Editor



In a controversial new policy, South Bend School Corp. lowered the grade point average requirement for student athletes. The previous requirement for students to participate in athletics was a 2.0 GPA (a C average) for students grades six through twelve. The new policy requires students to pass 70 percent of all their classes (5 D- grades and 2 F's). This allows freshmen to participate with a 1.5 GPA, sophomores with a 1.67, juniors with a 1.85, and seniors would continue to be required to have a 2.0. Students who do not qualify for the GPA requirements can still participate if their grades show improvement and they partake in tutoring.

The school board's 5-2 vote on August 3 followed a passionate debate on both sides. Those opposed to the change believe that expectations for athletes should not be lowered; rather that the athletes should rise to meet expectations. In an op-ed to the South Bend Tribune, retired Notre Dame men's basketball coach Richard "Digger" Phelps wrote, "The purpose is to give students an incentive to do better in school. When you challenge kids, most will meet the challenge. When you don't challenge them, many students will be satisfied to get by with D's while dozing through remedial classes." Tori Canarecci, a junior at Adams said, "This is basically saying that sports are more impor-

tant than school. It's taking away the motivation for athletes to do well in school." Mary Claire Burnett, a junior and, notably, captain of the girls' soccer team said, "It seems unfair....athletes should be responsible not only on the field but in the classroom. This sets the standards lower so students won't be as motivated."

Those who support the policy change argued that students turned away by athletics will give up academics. LaSalle Intermediate Academy coach Milt Lee says students are "falling through the cracks" and argues that participation in athletics is a way to potentially save them. Burnett continued: "I can see how the new GPA could help kids who are not typically in activities and such positive environments get involved." Other proponents point to the balancing of the athletic field: both Mishawaka Public Schools and Penn Harris Madison instituted the aforementioned policy years ago. Additionally, the policy was instituted by the state, however, each district was given the opportunity to install their own revamped policy - that's what SBCSC had done. Supporters believe this will not only balance the level of competition, but catch students from falling through the system. Opponents believe it creates an opportunity for students to slack off and emphasizes athletics over education. The policy will be evaluated annually.

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### EDITORIAL POLICY

The Tower serves to supplement the educational environment of John Adams High School by providing an informative and entertaining source of news and communication to the students, faculty, staff, parents and the community. In addition, the publication is committed to the conversation of fine journalistic standards. All unsigned editorials represent a majority vote of the Editorial Board which consists of Tower members and the advisor. Signed editorials, cartoons, and illustrations represent the viewpoint of the individual author or artist. The tower reserves the right to refuse any advertising copy or ad which does not meet our standards. Advertising and letters may be delivered to room 1831, Mrs. Buchmann's mail box, or mailed to John Adams High School 808 S Twyckenham Dr, South Bend, IN 46615.



*"But it's clear to me that at a moment like this, being more open about it could do some good."* - Mayor Pete Buttigieg

# LOVE WINS

ALLI GREEN • Scene Editor

This past summer, after myriad court battles, decisions, and appeals, the Supreme Court finally made a decision on the legalization of same sex marriage. On June 26, 2015, the nine Justices of the Supreme court concluded, in a close 5-4 decision, that gay marriage would be legal throughout the United States, no matter a person's sexual orientation or gender. Same sex marriages are now seen with equal dignity in the eyes of the law.

"No longer may this liberty be denied," Justice Anthony M. Kennedy wrote for the majority in the memorable decision.

After the Supreme Court ruling, President Obama congratulated the community on the victory. "I just wanted to say congratulations. Your leadership has changed the country." He later said, "Americans should be very proud because small acts of courage slowly made an entire country realize that love is love."

In South Bend, people gathered downtown at the St. Joseph County courthouse to celebrate on the steps. A few stores downtown hung flags and wore shirts to celebrate.

Days before the Supreme Court reached a verdict,

Mayor of South Bend, Pete Buttigieg, wrote an essay published in the South Bend Tribune's Voices page titled "Why Coming Out Matters." In this article, the Mayor openly admits that he is gay and it's something he struggled with. "I was well into adulthood before I was prepared to acknowledge the simple fact that I am gay," said Mayor Pete. "It took years of struggle and growth for me to recognize that it's just a fact of life, like having brown hair, and part of who I am."

Many have shown their support towards the Mayor via social media. "Putting something this personal on the pages of a newspaper does not come easily," the Mayor explained. "But it's clear to me that at a moment like this, being more open about it could do some good." "For a local student struggling with her sexuality, it might be helpful for an openly gay mayor to send the message that her community will always have a place for her," said Mayor Buttigieg.

"We're moving closer to a world in which acceptance is the norm," wrote the Mayor. "I hope that when my children are old enough to understand politics, they will be puzzled that someone like me revealing he is gay was ever considered to be newsworthy."

# ART BEAT 2015

ARIEANNA EATON • Managing Editor

Every year artists and connoisseurs of all walks of life converge onto the streets of downtown South Bend, and 2015 will be no different. Art Beat will be hitting the streets again this Saturday, August 29, and residents of Michiana will have the opportunity to experience all the talent the area has to offer.

From noon to 8 P.M. visitors will see Michigan St. transformed into an open air gallery to showcase the talents of local visual, performing, and culinary artists. This event, presented by Downtown South Bend Inc. (DTSB), is free and open to the public.

"I see Art Beat as an opportunity for everyone," DTSB events and operations coordinator Cathy Dietz told the "South Bend Tribune". "For visitors, it's a chance to discover. For the artists, it's a chance to be discovered. And, for the community as a whole, it's a chance to see how much talent we have right here in Michiana."

Visitors will even get the chance to showcase their talents at a community art project. Jake Webster will be leading this year's Community Art Project, instructing people to collaborate on a "Material Abstraction" art project. The project will be SB150-themed, and materials relating to South Bend will be used to form a collage, where the items are secured using thick layers of paint. Members of the community are encouraged to bring old items to contribute to the project. Items can range from an old flyer from a South Bend event to a program from a local area high school.

Art Beat has traditionally attracted an estimated 10,000 visitors who come to see artists who hail from the Indiana counties of St. Joseph, Elkhart, La Porte, Starke, and Marshall and the Michigan counties of Berrien and Cass.

This year, there will be five different stages where musical performances will be taking place. Expect music to be pouring from Jefferson St., Washington St., the State Theater, the Gridiron, and Studebaker Plaza throughout the day. Art Beat hosts an eclectic blend of melodies, including African drumming, Zumba, rock, and more. The Jazz Festival will be hosted on the Jon Hunt Plaza at the Morris Performing Arts Center.

The Culinary Arts Village will be across the street from the Century Center, on the corner of St. Joseph and Jefferson. Here, visitors have the opportunity to taste the flavors of the Gaelic region, the fresh local produce, and the intricate creations of top chefs. The Beer Garden, courtesy of City Wide Liquor, is sure to be a hit with parents looking to get through the day.

Many artists will be along the streets, displaying art in various mediums including watercolor, jewelry, print-making, drawing/sketching, pottery, sculpting and fiber crafts. Vendors will also be on hand selling food and crafts.

Since its inception in 2003, Art Beat has become one of the most iconic festivals of the year for Michiana.

"It's appealing," Dietz said, "and art is just a cool way of bringing people together."



MADDY KIMMELL • Reporter

REVIEW

Controversial, ground breaking, thought provoking, and revolutionary: these are the words that come to mind whenever the group N.W.A. is mentioned. Known for years as the group that produced controversial yet wildly successful music, N.W.A, which stands for N\*\*\*\* With Attitude, has finally received the opportunity to be seen and heard on the big screen.

Directed by F. Gary Gray (Friday), the musical biopic, "Straight Outta Compton" follows the story of the N.W.A. from its formation, to its tumultuous career and to its eventual end. Set in the infamous town of Compton, California, the film accurately and vividly takes the audience to an environment which the citizens of Compton dealt with during the mid-eighties. The group, consisting of Ice Cube, Dr. Dre, Eazy-E, DJ Yella, and MC Ren, used its music as a medium to tell the world about their everyday struggles in an oppressive environment overrun with abusive authorities. The film deals with the tense relations within the group and the external pressures the group was faced with. Discussing issues of race, violence, and social class, the film spares no time easing the audience into the heart of the film. With a focus on racism towards young African American males, the film is especially poignant on the heels of tragedies such as Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Walter Scott, Freddy Gray, and countless more.

Fellow filmmaker Ava DuVernay praised Gray's brutal honesty saying, "He captured the plight of the black artist in general, once consumed by systems and structures not made for them. The struggle is real." Senior Philip Hostetler commended the film saying, "Straight Outta Compton' delivers not only the story of young musicians finding their place in the music world, but also a profound look into the racial tensions intertwined with the rap genre in the 90's".

Although many have lauded the film for its honesty, people have stepped forward claiming that the film covers up or ignores various parts of the group's past. Misogynistic undertones were a major part of the group's music and many have criticized the film's apparent failure to depict the group's true mentality and instead ignored the rocky parts of N.W.A's past. Reporter Jamilah Lemieux criticized the film saying, "In the wake of the movie's success... it seems audiences across the country may cast aside N.W.A's potent brand of misogyny..."

Despite the film's short fallings, it is still wonderfully acted and directed, the most notable performance being the one given by O'Shea Jackson playing his father Ice Cube. The film carries strong themes of racial tensions and brutality that leave the audience thinking.

## ADAMS SOCCER

ALEX SEARFOSS • Sports Editor

With the fall sports season kicking off, the JA girls soccer team is ready to set the ball in motion (pun intended). They have worked hard this offseason, spending the summer tuning their play. JA senior and co-captain, Reneé Montgomery, has a lot she and the team want to accomplish this year, but one thing stands out among those goals: "Honestly, I just want to beat Penn. They're the only team in the NIC that we haven't beaten and I think it would be a great memory for the whole team if we won."

Coach Caryn Mackenzie is entering her 2nd year at the helm; the team went 5-6-1 in her first year, a significant improvement from the year before. The team is looking to improve, which is easier said than done, especially considering the schedule. JA faces 10 of their 16 teams on the road, including St. Joe and Mishawaka. Regardless of the tough schedule, Montgomery isn't worried, "If I had to think of one word to describe the team it would be fierce. We have a lot of heart and we care about the game." The team will be lead by returning leading scorers, junior Maryclaire Burnett and sophomore Mary Cate Varga. Senior Catherine Mittiga looks to return to form after dazzling as a freshman and sophomore, but not playing last year.

While nobody is quite sure what will become of

this season, it is safe to say that it will be an exciting one. Over the weekend, the girls went 1-1-1, starting the tournament with a tie to Northwood (2-2), then losing the next game to Munster (3-0). The girls finished the tournament with a win against Lake Shore (3-2).

### Eagles Fall in Season Opener

This past Friday, the Adams Football team fell short, losing to Northridge 10-7. Right away, the team had difficulty with turnovers: the first play of the season was a lost fumble. In addition, the Eagles threw four interceptions (1 of which was on a failed halfback pass), making it difficult to maintain any momentum throughout the night.

Junior Tavonte Malone had the 'hit of the night' early in the game, tackling a receiver from Northridge in midair down to the ground. Starting junior quarterback, Andrew Burgess, ran for over 70 yards. Senior center, Colin Reed said, "I feel like the game was a fight from beginning to end. There are things we need to adjust on offense and defense. We will come back stronger every Friday, win or lose."

This Friday Adams will face Reavis High School at School Field starting at 7 PM. Go Eagles!

## UPCOMING VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE:

**FRIDAY AUG. 28<sup>TH</sup>**  
*at School Field vs*  
Reavis High School

**FRIDAY SEPT. 4<sup>TH</sup>**  
*at School Field vs*  
South Bend Riley

**FRIDAY SEPT. 11<sup>TH</sup>**  
*at Mishawaka vs*  
Mishawaka High School

**FRIDAY SEPT. 18<sup>TH</sup>**  
*at Penn vs*  
Penn High School

**FRIDAY SEPT. 25<sup>TH</sup>**  
*at School Field vs*  
South Bend Clay

**FRIDAY OCT. 2<sup>ND</sup>**  
*at School Field vs*  
Elkhart Central

**FRIDAY OCT. 9<sup>TH</sup>**  
*at School Field vs*  
South Bend Washington

**FRIDAY OCT. 16<sup>TH</sup>**  
*at School Field vs*  
South Bend St. Joe