



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF LUNCH AT NDA, 2



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THE GAVEL



Volleyball Panda Morgan Hentz: Next stop, Stanford

Notre Dame Academy's Morgan Hentz is a volleyball player who made a name for herself in Northern Kentucky by leading the Pandas to the state semifinals. This time next year, she will be playing her volleyball at Stanford University. **Story, 6**

Inside lunch at NDA

Hundreds of meals, smiles served daily



Alecia Radford enjoying ice cream during lunch.



Lois Vallandingham preparing chicken fingers.

Every day, lunch at Notre Dame Academy starts at 8:30 a.m. -- not for the students, but for the kitchen staff, which makes up to 500 hot meals, 50 to 100 sandwiches, two different soups and a fresh salad bar daily, plus other items that can be purchased a la carte.

With this five-hour work day comes a heavy workload and a labor-intensive day. Mrs. Brungs, NDA cafeteria manager, and staffers Bonnie Meyer and Lois Vallandingham said that NDA has much more variety than ever in its menu.

A typical school lunch -- the hot meal, vegetable, and fruit -- costs \$3.25. Every day they factor in that not only will a student get this, but also might get something extra, such as ice cream from the ice cream bar. Mrs. Brungs and the lunch staff know a month in advance what the lunches are going to be. Some food arrives frozen, a week before those lunches are actually served. The produce required for the salad bar is fresh each day. Anything that isn't eaten is now put in the new compost heap outside.

Last year, a survey went out to make accommodations for girls with certain dietary needs. Though Notre Dame is not a part of Healthy

Hunger-Free Kids Act, initiated in 2010 by First Lady Michelle Obama, the school does follow some of the guidelines. As of this year we have added soy and organic milk, better vegetarian options, including veggie burgers, and hummus chip dip. On many Fridays, meals are also meat free. In 2014, soft drinks were added to the menu.

Preparation time can vary. Sometimes workers are just finishing preparing the food right as the bell rings; other times, like pizza day, they have the food cooked a few minutes before the bell rings.

Kylie Hardcorn, a sophomore, says, "I don't like eating a lot of meat, and am glad that the school has made changes to the menu so that I don't have to pack as much."

Overall, the kitchen staffers say they do feel both recognized and appreciated by the girls. Making 10,000 chicken fingers or 400 fiesta sticks for lunch does pay off.

Seeing the students enjoy the food and saying "thank you" after typing or scanning their lunch codes makes the day so much better. The lunch ladies said, in closing, "We hope it's true when the girls say 'Notre Dame has the best school lunches in Northern Kentucky.' "

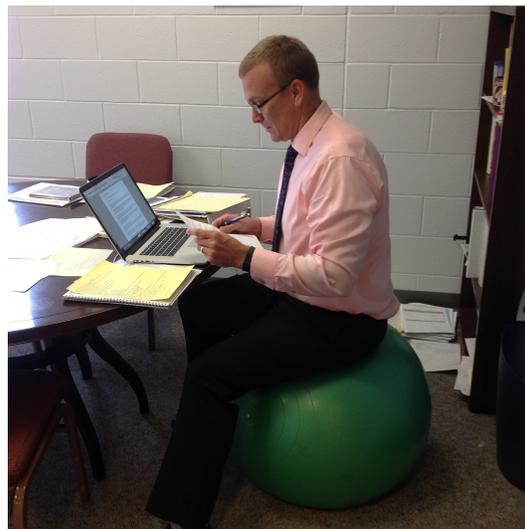
-- Sarah Williams

arouND school

What's new? Here's a few for starters

1.

Shown to the right is our new principal, Mr. Jack VonHandorf. He has been adapting to the NDA community and has been actively involved within the student body. As this is a new school for him, Mr. VonHandorf made it a priority to become very familiar with students and faculty in order to fulfill a successful 2015-2016 school year. So far, Mr. VonHandorf has been involved in activities such as senior retreat, pep rallies and sporting events. In preparation for the on-going school year, Mr. VonHandorf is efficiently working to get everything done.



2.

Another innovation new to the Academy is the green screen composed for our Friday morning video announcements, which is a new showcase initiated this year. The show consists of co-anchors, editors, filmmakers, a director, and script-writers. This Blue-Gold Network has been a huge success so far. Mrs. Mullee is in charge of the S.W.A.T. and Media Production courses here at NDA, and incorporating something new into our mornings provides an ambitious, yet fulfilling, new schedule for the day.



3.

Notre Dame Academy's new sign located at the entrance of the driveway is also something new here for the 2015-2016 school year. Here, news and recognitions are showcased for cars and people passing by to see. With the new sign, more messages are able to be shown, and are also shown in a way that is more impactful. The NDA Pandas are excited to see new accomplishments of their fellow classmates shown here throughout the year.



-- Katie Summe



THE TEMPEST: INSIDE AND OUT

From

the Inside

In the basement of Notre Dame Academy, in the dressing room lined with mirrors and lights for makeup and hair preparation, Ms. Caroline Stine sits on the floor, hot-glueing a costume for that night's rehearsal of *The Tempest*.

Students from NDA and CCH flitter around -- doing hair, makeup, fixing costumes, and getting ready for that night's show. I asked Ms. Stine what most surprised her about the Notre Dame theatre program. She said that the amazingly talented students is what most surprised her. She said that the most unique thing our program has to offer is the student leadership in design



and technical theatre -- in addition to the actors, all the people who make everything happen behind the scenes.

As someone involved in the play, I don't think people recognize how much time and effort students and adults invest and pour into the production.

Tech week is the best example of this commitment.

Students arrive at the theater at 4:30 p.m., after a long, hard day at school, and then get ready, practice and rehearse until 9:30 p.m. Everyone is expected to be there, and to be excellent. Students are fully committed.

The theatre program has so much to offer. Senior Sullivan Blackburn, who played Sycorax, the evil witch and mother of Caliban, said the people are the best thing about the program. Ellie O'Hara, a freshman who landed the role of Miranda, the daughter of Prospero, said it was a way for her to get out of reality.

The NDA theatre program followed *The Tempest* with four performances of *The Snow Queen* in December. Next is the NDA/CCH Showcase in February!

- Leah Darpel



MAGGIE BRINKMAN LEADS HER CREW TO SAFETY DURING A STORM AS BOATSWAIN.

An Outside Perspective

As a huge patron of the NDA/CCH theatre program (as well as Ms. Caroline Stine), I was ecstatic to hear we were doing *The Tempest*.

Personally knowing the students that would bring Shakespeare's characters to life, the people behind the scenes, and the directors, I knew it would be phenomenal. I had friends actually in the show keep me updated on how far they had come in the show, what the costumes were going to be like, who was playing which role. Being connected to the play in this way gave me a significant advantage: seeing the show from start to finish before anyone else with a behind-the-scenes look that not many people get.

The show included incredible music (composed by junior Sarah Draud), awesome light work (by Katie Stratman), and beautiful costumes, makeup, and hair (thanks to Anna Jennings and Fiona Blackburn, who also played a nymph in the show).

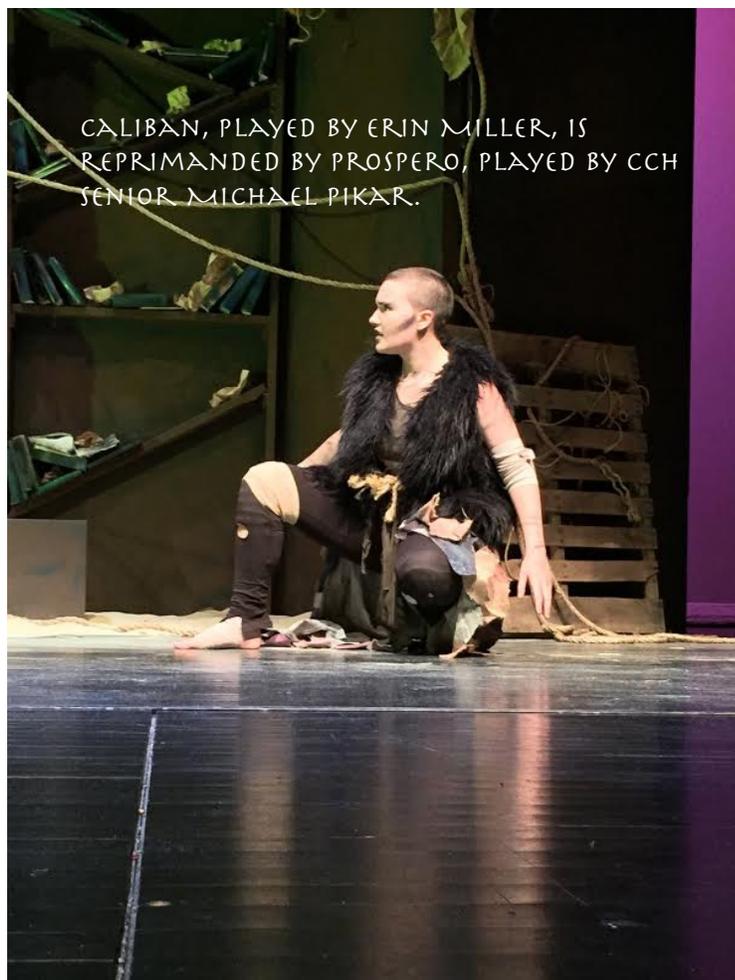
I have never really been a huge fan of Shakespeare's plays, because usually we read right from the books, which can make them hard to understand. I could follow everything perfectly because of the enthusiasm the actors showed in expressing their lines and their understanding of the storyline. I can officially say that this production by a high school has made me a huge fan.

Bravo, you guys!

- Savanna Hasenkamp



ANNE SIMENDINGER, AS ARIEL, LULLS TO MARINERS TO SLEEP WITH THE HELP OF THE NYMPHS.



CALIBAN, PLAYED BY ERIN MILLER, IS REPRIMANDED BY PROSPERO, PLAYED BY CCH SENIOR MICHAEL PIKAR.

Pandas' Hentz spiking her way to Stanford

"I started playing in third grade just because my friends did it and I wanted to be with them. Then I realized I had a passion." -- Morgan Hentz

Morgan Hentz, a senior at Notre Dame Academy, is an all-star on the volleyball court and in the classroom.

In May 2015, Hentz committed to play volleyball at Stanford in Palo Alto, California. "Stanford was my first choice because of their academics, coaches and location," Hentz said. Asked about her thoughts of the future, Hentz sat up straight, laughed a little and, with a twinkle in her eye, said, "I hope to improve, of course, and possibly become a professional someday."

Hentz said she started playing in third grade but then started playing club volleyball in the sixth grade, which she said is the time she realized she had a real love and passion for the game. Hentz helped lead the Pandas to a 33-6 record and the semifinals of the KHSAA state tournament, where NDA lost to eventual state champion Assumption. Hentz and teammate Hannah Talkers were named to the all-tournament team at state.

It's no secret that Hentz works hard to be the best volleyball player on the court. During the high school season, she practiced or played for two hours every day, except for Sunday. Hentz also plays for a club team that practices three days a week for two hours.

Everyone who follows volleyball knows Morgan Hentz's name. Her talent is well-known. When asked how she stays grounded when her success is constantly being talked about, she said, "I think about the kids who don't have the same opportunities and I remember how blessed I am. I think about how if I didn't have these opportunities then I'd want someone out there working hard so that's what I do."



Morgan Hentz launches a serve in the Pandas' Playing for a Purpose matchup against St. Henry. Hentz, who helped the Pandas finish 33-6 this fall, will play in college at Stanford next year.

Soon, Morgan Hentz will leave NDA and move on to winning games for Stanford. Asked what she'll miss most about being a Panda, Hentz said, "I'll miss spending time with the other great athletes, the training and the great girls. I'll also miss the game rituals like going out to eat with my team."

Hentz will be greatly missed by the volleyball staff but more importantly she'll be missed by her sisters in faith. We wish her the best of luck in her future career!

- Jordan Ackerson

Cross country

New course, familiar success for Pandas

With 84 girls on the team, the cross country Pandas were one of the largest teams in Northern Kentucky. Meets almost every weekend prepared them for the two big meets at the end of the season, regionals and state.

Practice prepared the Pandas, although the mile and 600 repeats were the Pandas' least favorite. "Mile repeats are terrible, because you have to run up Cardiac Hill," junior Macy Moriconi said about practices. Cardiac Hill is the dreaded, monstrous hill on Notre Dame's home course, new this year.

Getting personal records, or "PRs," was a goal for everyone at every single meet. "I hope to beat 20 minutes this season," Natalie Kleier said; at the state meet in November, where the Pandas finished 18th, Kleier did, finishing in 19:59.40, best on the team.

The Pandas agreed that their coach, Chris Herren, always had them prepared. "The workouts and trainings really pay off, and you can tell a difference from the beginning of the season," Moriconi said. Along with head coach Herren, the Pandas were trained by assistant coaches Barry Hudephole, Kate Marks, Dorothy Hafertepen, and Kristin Geiger.



Notre Dame Academy cross country runners Jordan Kreutzkamp and Natalie Gerdes model their medals.

"During a race, I usually try to tell myself that pain is temporary and pride is forever," said Moriconi. "This really helps me push through the pain and compete."

Manager Carlie Brooks says there was a ton of competition on the team. "Everyone always wants to be in the first group, so during practice everyone really tries their best in hopes to move up to the varsity spot," Brooks said. The top ten runners make varsity, with the top five having secure spots and the rest of the team fighting to be in the mix for the state meet.

"We are in the hardest division, triple A, which is all the big public schools and big Louisville schools, so we really just hope to qualify and move up in state." Moriconi said.

- Lauren Lawler

JUST CALL HER CAPTAIN

Notre Dame student Gabrielle Lonnemann has been voted to lead her soccer team in multiple seasons. Care to know why?

Gabrielle Lonnemann, a senior at NDA, has shown great leadership. This leadership is prominently seen by her contributions as captain for Notre Dame Academy's soccer teams throughout the years. Not only is she now



Macy Tranter, Gabrielle Lonnemann, Taylor Watts

the captain of this year's varsity team, but she also served a term as freshman captain.

Freshman year everyone was new to each other and first impressions were vital. Being a natural born leader, Gabrielle was one of the first to take charge and do her best to get to know everyone.

It wasn't just her natural talents that influenced this persona.

"My sister had been captain of her soccer teams at NDA, too, and was the captain of the varsity team," Gabrielle said. "I just thought of how cool it could be to be a captain of the freshman team while she was captain of the varsity team. That, and I truly thought I could be a good leader."

Gabrielle said she has also been influenced by her parents, who have always been leaders: Her mom as a principal; her father in the military.

Following in her family's footsteps, Gabrielle found herself leading a team in her senior year. This time around, Gabrielle saw a change in herself.

"I had become more mature. Leading became more than trying to be nice, but being disciplined and

devoted to the team and the lifestyle it requires," she said. Gabrielle spends a lot of her time not only excelling in her academics and working hard in practice but also eating healthy by munching on carrots, going on frequent runs on days she doesn't practice, and refining her foot skills outside in the yard. Gabrielle is a full-time devoted soccer player and captain.

When asked what being a leader meant to her, Gabrielle said, "A leader does the right thing when no one is watching and doesn't expect anything in return. They are consistent, moral, disciplined, determined, respectful, compassionate, and full of motivation for more than themselves."

Her teammates agreed.

Ellie Vandergriff, a junior, said, "Gabby is hard-working and a natural leader. She is always positive and wanting what's best for the team. I can always trust her to have my back."

Christin Sherrard, a junior, said, "She is so positive. During our game against Highlands we got scored on. Instead of making a bad thing of it, she turned it around as motivation for us to score and win instead of motivation to give up." Junior Sidney Spivey: "Motivational and inspiring. Before games we gather in a circle and almost every time Gab prints off inspirational quotes and hands them off to all of us."

It is no doubt that Gabrielle works hard to be positive but she also shines by being outgoing. She explained that she really likes to reflect on choices before she makes them. Even simpler things, like when people ask her



Gabrielle Lonnemann with her parents on Senior Night.

for advice -- she often takes a day to reflect on what she knows, to get the best possible outcome. She admits that she doesn't always get a good reaction but it never dulls her day. "Sometimes I'll try to make friends, say hi and how are you to a stranger, and they just look at me and walk away, but that's OK."

Her organization skills are sharp. She keeps a calendar and a to-do list and each day crosses off the things she has completed. "The only bad thing about this is that I obsess over my mistakes, but I don't really see that as a flaw in leading, but makes me more compassionate, because I know what it's like to feel bad."

Gabrielle was asked why she thinks she has been continuously looked up to and voted to be a captain for others. She responded, "I take the game seriously. I work hard, so not only I could get better, but my teammates as well. At least I hope that's what people saw in me."

Fall sports recap

GOLF: The Pandas qualified for the KHSAA state tournament, where they finished fourth in a 21-team field. Senior Erin Durstock finished ninth overall (72-78), followed by junior Lauren Bracken (79-80), senior Amy Pugliano 82-82), junior Abby Bricking (88-94) and Caitlyn Zielenewski (101-98).

SOCCER: The Pandas reached the KHSAA state tournament and beat Bishop Brossart 3-0 in the first round before falling 1-0 to eventual state champion Sacred Heart in the elite eight.

CROSS COUNTRY: The Pandas qualified for the state meet at Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, where they finished 18th in a fast field. NDA was led by senior Natalie Kleier (52nd overall), sophomore Manon Stovik (125), freshman Kate Williams (131), senior Eliza Lenihan (141), freshman Jenna Kayze (143) and sophomores Riley Green (171) and Sammie Kleier (183).

VOLLEYBALL: The Ninth Region champion Pandas reached the state tournament again, beating Henry Clay and North Oldham before falling to eventual state champion Assumption in the semifinal round.

Panda Sisters

Program connects gap between seniors, freshmen

What is Panda Sisters? NDA seniors are sisters of NDA freshmen and help mentor them.

Why was Panda Sisters started? We started Panda Sisters because we really wanted to connect the gap between the senior and freshman grade and by doing so we wanted to promote more school spirit. The seniors really wanted to create a relationship with the freshmen and be positive role models in their lives as they transition from grade school to high school.

One Panda family experience:

Seniors: Tess Witt and Julia Gerwe

Freshmen: Annie Gronotte, Allie Piccirillo, and Sarah Zimmer

From the freshman point of view:
Annie Gronotte

"I have two younger brothers and even though I've always wanted a sister, I never got one, but now I feel like I have 600 sisters that will always be there for me."

This Panda family communicates through a group message. The senior Panda sisters put a little gift in the freshman Pandas' lockers; they wrote a note, bringing a big smile to Annie's face. She still has the note; she put it in her binder to look back at on a bad day. Annie feels she can always go to Tess and Julia and truly rely on them. Their Panda family has proposed meeting for breakfast on a few late starts out of the year, going to games and events together, and doing other fun activities as a family. "The senior Panda sisters have made me feel more comfortable at Notre Dame Academy," Annie said.

"Panda Sisters is a great way to bring together every class here at NDA and make everyone feel welcomed and loved." -Tess Witt

From the senior point of view:
Tess Witt

"I get to interact with people that I remember being like. I remember being that lost freshman, trying to find her way to English class, trying to figure out which days to buy lunch ... Now I get to share my wisdom over these four years. It's really quite a special connection."

Tess joined because "it seemed like a great way to get more involved with the school, and I remember being that same freshman." Tess would have loved to have someone freshman year to show her around the school. Panda Sisters has influenced Tess in a positive way because she feels "more connected with the school that I love." Tess feels closer to the freshmen. In years past she never got the opportunity to get to know other people that weren't in her grade. This program has really brought the Panda sisterhood to life. What Tess likes best about being a Panda Sister is "the fact I get to interact with people I wouldn't be able to get to know without it." She wants to be able to connect with them on a level that goes deeper than just school work and classes. Tess wishes she had this activity freshman year, because "it is difficult being a freshman and it makes the freshman transition a lot smoother."

- Annie Cheesman

