The Cadet Courier

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Seniors Win Spirit Stick Back-to-Back!

After winning last year, the seniors return to claim the Spirit Stick again

By Joshua Gonzalez

As a senior at West Point-Beemer High School, Santiago was part of the class that won the Homecoming Spirit Stick for the second year in a row. After winning it last year as juniors, the seniors came back hoping to repeat their success. Santiago said he was happy with the result, even though he was not sure the class would win again. Out of all the activities during Spirit Week, he enjoyed the dodgeball tournament the most because it gave the seniors another chance to compete together and make memories during their final year of high school.

Santiago believed that working together and having each other's backs helped make the senior class succeed once again. He also recognized that the other grades put up a challenge. He mentioned the juniors as possible competition because "many of them dressed up during Spirit Week and had a better hallway," he said. Even with the competition, the seniors came out on top and earned another victory. For Santiago and his classmates, winning back to back years made the week more exciting and gave the seniors another accomplishment to celebrate together.

While Santiago enjoyed competing with his classmates, senior Manny Figueroa focused on what made the Class of 2027 special and how the seniors supported one another throughout Spirit Week.

When asked how he felt, Manny said he was excited that the seniors won the Spirit Stick for the second consecutive year. At first, he was nervous because the class was doing well in the Minute to Win It games, but he was unsure how the hallway decorating and dressing-up competitions would turn out. Once he realized they had won, he was excited to get the Spirit Stick and hold it up.

Something else he had fun with was the dodgeball tournament because the seniors played well against the other teams and joked that the

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teachers had little chance against them.

Manny Figueroa even knew the senior class was built differently from the other grades. “That week we all came together and there’s not anybody who is ever left out”, Manny said. He explained that their class genuinely cares about each other and they spend time together to make the bond even stronger.

Now winning comes with pressure and for Manny, he had moments where he worried about not winning. He discussed that he got nervous when the seniors lost the finish-the lyrics competition and the rock-paper-scissors game to the juniors. Since the juniors had already won two events, he began to wonder whether the seniors would win.

David Barrios, another senior, gave their opinions on the overall experience leading up to the big game day. The moment their class won, he knew it felt good to be part of history saying “not many people win back to back”, he said. Even the dodgeball was fun for him since he never got to be a part of something like that and he soaked it all in by the end.

David also stated that the seniors had many years of experience and more than anyone else because the bond and friendship is so close and a key to another spirit stick.

David, like the rest of the grade, was anxious as well to see if the seniors had what it took to win. He noticed that at the beginning of the games, their grade was behind by a lot of points and knew they had to come together. When they had won and came out on top, he was ecstatic!

King On and Off the Field

Senior Hunter Doggett wins Homecoming King while catching two touchdowns in a Homecoming Victory

By Roberto Perez

For many highschool students being homecoming king can be a moment they would never forget. For Hunter, it became even more special when he scored two touchdowns during the homecoming football game. He has brought his talents on and off the field by keeping his dedication and hard work throughout his years under the Friday night lights his success wasn't just about what happened under the Friday night lights. It was the result of years of hard work preparation and the trust in his teammates.

Being chosen as homecoming king meant a lot for Hunter, because he has grown up with all of his classmates. “I have known all these people for years,” Hunter said. “Getting to know everybody is a blessing, and people choosing me to be king means more than they know.” While homecoming week gave Hunter a chance to celebrate with his classmates, Football remained a major focus. He explained that getting his mindset ready for games starts long before Friday night. He spends a lot of time watching films and studying what the opposing teams do. His coaches and teammates are also a huge important part in helping him prepare.

“I’ve always been able to trust that my teammates have my back no matter what goes right or wrong,” Hunter said. Being able to have trust with teammates can be a good help and can show their trust on and off the field. On his first touchdown Hunter recognized that the opposing team’s coverage could break down. He found his opportunity in the end zone and trusted Mason to make the throw. “On my first touchdown, I knew that their coverage gets busted very easily, so I was just able to trust

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in Mason to be able to throw me a good ball for a touchdown.

His second touchdown came after putting in extra work. Hunter remembered a move he had practiced. That preparation paid off when he used the move to get around a defender and once again scored a touchdown thrown by Mason. “I used a move that I kept practicing which I felt really good about. As someone who has experienced the pressure and excitement of playing football, Hunter also has advice for younger students who hope to eventually be on the homecoming stage.



“I would tell the freshman to work hard outside of practice, "Hunter said. “Everything you do puts into football. Also be kind to one another because the world needs peace and nice people. For Hunter, Football is more than touchdowns wins; it has taught him lessons about hard work and teamwork. His homecoming night showed all those qualities, making his two touchdowns and becoming homecoming king were more than just his accomplishments. They were the results of years of dedication and the support of the people around him. “ Football is more than just a game, " Hunter said. “It can teach you life lessons, and I think the lessons you learn along the way are way more valuable than winning any game.” Learning lessons from a sport can help you in your everyday life choices and can teach you responsibilities that you will need throughout your life.

Crossing the Conference Line

West Point Beemer Nebraska's cross country team goes to conference

By Javier Berganza

Running and jogging is a hobby that a lot of students and teachers pick up, but some students want to run for a team. West Point Beemer’s cross country team travelled to the conference meet that took place on their home territory West Point Nebraska.

The boys and girls that ran though they overperformed for the conference meet Senior Joshua Gonzalez stated “I think that we overperformed. I mean a lot of kids on the high school cross country team got a new personal record(PR) with their runs.” Joshua Gonzalez says that many students got a personal record including him during the conference meet.

Although many boys got a new personal record the girls also got new records Freshman Gianni Sanchez says “I was really glad on how i performed due to the fact that I got a new personal record while I was running.” Gianni Sanchez got a new PR which is why she was so happy about her performance.

Crossing the line is what matters most to the cross

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country team. You need points for your team to win or place so while running you need to deal with aches and pains Josh says “I deal with aches and pains before the race. Before racing you need to make sure you get a good stretch, don't overstretch nor understretch as that can lead to cramps. I use Biofreeze before the race to keep my muscles nice and ready.” Keeping your body stretched is one of the most important points of running a good time.

The race kicks off and you start. The start is one of the most important parts of the races where you want to kick off and try your best. Freshman Gianni Sanchez says, “When starting a race you really want to get up and go. Find a pace that can stick with you the whole race and keep running that pace.” Gianni Sanchez says that when you start a race you want to find your pace as early as you can where you're still in a good position so you can overtake later in the race.

While starting you need to find the pace where it's not tiring you out. That part is sometimes the hardest part of the race Josh says “ When starting I struggle to find my pace and keep running. But when I do it makes the race a whole lot easier.” This shows that when starting you need to find the pace that won't tire you out but get you in a good position.

Your breath is heavy, the finish line is in sight, your hearing people cheer your name “keep pushing” you get a kick through the yells and you finish the race. This is the motivation that you get while hearing people cheer your name Josh says “I could hear my parents cheering me on,



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and specifically that this is the first race they saw me running at made me want to do really good and I ended up PR'ing." This is a prime example of how cheering can help you push past your limits.

The race is over and you come out with more than just a win. Friendships have been made, teammates are cheering. This is what it means to be in cross country. It's not just running, it's giving others friendships that will last a lifetime.

"I Made It"

How my mother shaped my view of respect and citizenship

By Camila Calderon

Growing up in a hispanic household, you learn one important thing that will naturally bleed into your lifestyle throughout your entire life: have respect. Respect your students and teachers at school, respect your family at home, and respect your coworkers at work. For many years, my mom aimed to teach her children that you had to do things right, but I couldn't understand why she enforced it so much. "There is always something you can do," she would say. I realized that her obsession to teach us these characteristics was because of the pivotal moment in which she dedicated her life to America.

When my mother came to the United States illegally, walking across two deserts before reaching the border and crossing it illegally, she decided she wanted to permanently stay in the United States, so she began studying for her citizenship test. At the time I, her eldest daughter, was eight, but my mom believed it was just the right age for me to ask her questions like, "What is one freedom or right guaranteed by the First Amendment?" as she ran around the house, ironing her blazer and putting her hair in a tight bun. My mother shared, "There were many things I had no idea about: the geography, the history, the presidents, the constitution. There were many things to take in in a matter of months while dealing with work, home, family, and being able to pay off dues, so I studied hard."



My mother is always known to be obsessively responsible down to a tee. Ever since she left her family at home to build a better life in the United States, she always made sure she never got into any trouble. She always arrives at appointments twenty minutes early, never speeds, and pays her loans and bills long before their due. It was definitely apparent when she studied for her citizenship test. "To be a good citizen is to do things the way they should be. Don't get into problems with people and the law. More than anything, respect the laws they have," she states.

Like many, she was very nervous. "My future was in the hands of other people. If they saw something about me that they didn't like they could deny me my citizenship and send me back to my country." However, her hard work inevitably paid off, and when she was given her citizenship, she was full of many emotions. "I cried of happiness because I knew my life was going to change. I was going to be able to stay and give a better life for my children and

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my family. I felt safe, and I felt blessed. I remember telling myself, 'I made it,'" she expresses.

My mother worked extremely hard, struggling with doubts and the fear of being sent back to her country, while simultaneously dealing with life like any other citizen. I realized that many have the privilege of not having to worry about navigating through those emotions. In school, many teachers hope to expose these situations to students to understand its impact, so Mr. Burtis decided to have his government class take the citizenship test. The result of this experience showed two-thirds of the students failing the test.

As the daughter of someone who saw firsthand what an impact the citizenship test had on those whose future was on the line, I couldn't help but furiously wonder, "How is it just that my mother has to take the test when native-born Americans seem to fail in doing so?" The answer to that question was very clear: there wasn't extreme severity on the line.

There are many reasons why students fail their test. Mr. Burtis states, "I think the main reason the results weren't so good was because we were fresh out of summer. They hadn't learned any government before then, so the attention wasn't very focused." Mr. Burtis decided to make the citizenship test to ensure students know the basic knowledge of their country. "I don't want any students at West Point to be a part of the statistic that a third of native-born citizens can't pass the test about our country, so that's why I made it part of my class" he shares. Mr. Burtis believes that the citizenship test was filled with general knowledge about the history and laws of our government, and that if you study and put effort into knowing these things, the test should be effortless and easy.

My mother is extremely hardworking, not only when she became a citizen, but ever since then. She continues to be respectful of the law and those around her because she wanted to prove that she deserves to be given the rights she had hoped for when she came to the United States, even now. It is because of the severity of the situation she was in that she had to learn the law, the language, and the history of this country, but I feel that regardless of the pressure put on her, she would still educate herself on the country she grew to love.

Mind Having a Seat for Me?

Robert Pattinson's *Primetime* forces audience members to "have a seat"

By Viviana Morales

"Why don't you have a seat right there for me?"

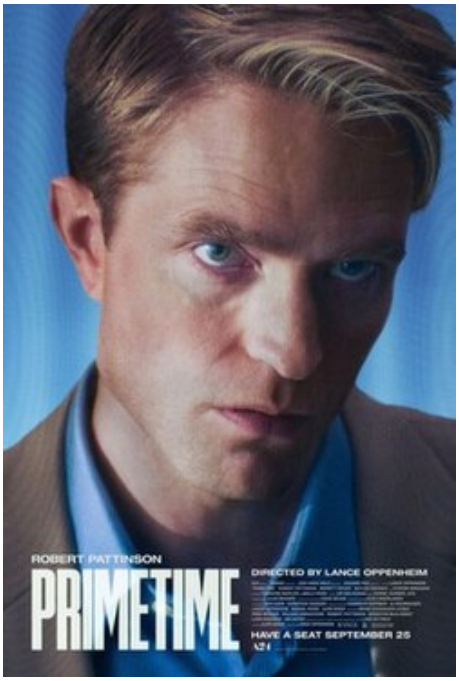
These are the chats of a predator, Dan. (get it …like this is the skin of a killer, Bell..ha ha …) Ever since I saw the trailer for *Primetime* drop, I knew I couldn't miss it as someone who has consumed a disgusting amount of content regarding Chris Hansen and To Catch A Predator. Lance Oppenheim made his narrative feature debut in *Primetime*, a film about Dateline's To Catch a Predator. The film stars Robert Pattinson as Chris Hansen. Alongside him are Merritt Wever and Skyler Gisondo as Andie Bender and Dan Plum, respectively. September 25th was when *Primetime* was released in theaters, and it very quickly became a hit at the box office. A movie about Chris Hansen, the guy who basically just caught pedophiles on TV back in the 2000s, seems like it would be some boring biopic, but in reality, *Primetime* is a deep faceted and complex drama/psychological thriller.

Yes, the same guy who was a sparkly vampire is the

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star of the entire movie. Robert Pattinson's acting is nothing short of encapsulating. He really gets the voice, mannerisms and cadence of Hansen down.(I mean it is borderline scary how close he is with the impression but mine is way better you have to believe me) I had my eyes on him the ENTIRE time he was on screen. To be able to keep the voice of Hansen while still portraying complex emotions is difficult, yet he does it effortlessly. It may seem like I'm glazing the guy... but it's for a good reason. The character of Hansen is layered and meant to make you feel confused and Pattinson gets it down! *Primetime* might genuinely be one of Pattinson's greatest individual



performances, and I'm confident to say that.

Besides Robert's acting, I have to say that I absolutely adored Skyler Gisondo's acting throughout the entire thing. Gisondo plays Dan Plum, an aspiring actor who gets hired as a decoy on set. I have to say this was absolutely perfect casting. Skyler just sort of looks like that type of kid who would do crazy tricks on a trampoline and it works! I would never have guessed that a decoy would play such a big role, but he did and it was a great decision. Skyler approaches the character of Dan with such convincing naivety. The whole point of Dan's character depends on how vulnerable and sort of "untouched" he is (Insert a joke here). He literally enters the movie auditioning for a role he has no idea about, singing "Seasons of Love" from the musical Rent. (Which has a ton of symbolism but you just sort of have to watch the movie to understand- wink wink #go watch it idk.)

Not even mentioning the chemistry that Robert had with Skyler on set. Dan and Hansen's relationship is so fascinating to watch because of them. Every time that they had a scene together, I was locked in, eyes on the screen, practically taking notes. They have such an odd dynamic, Dan who sort of looks up to Chris, seeing him as a guiding figure in a way, and Chris who views Dan as someone he needs to stay - someone who sort of is his last hope.

To add onto two already amazing actors, you have Merritt Wever, who plays Andie, the producer of the show. When she's on screen she is phenomenal. Her character is constantly popping and smacking gum, giving into that stereotype of the producer behind the scenes, which I loved! She acts as an anchor for Hansen, and seeing her act alongside Robert is fantastic. The divaness and Hansen and Andie, who has to tie it all together.

Besides the acting, I have to say that the cinematography and soundtrack were my favorite parts. Lance Oppenheim knows exactly what cinematic means. The colors, the shots he used were all so eye-catching. It sort of felt like staring into a 2 hour long kaleidoscope and I LOVED it. There was also the use of different cameras and angles. It switched from the grainy, retro, film television set to clean, crisp shots. Angle wise, it would cut from pervasive, invading closeups that made me sweat in my seat (I practically felt like I

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was the predator) to big looming shots of dramatic scenery. It felt like a fever dream to be honest, but in the most positive way. The color grading of the movie was another thing I loved, and it's probably the artsy side of me, but the use of the primary colors was simple but SO GOOD.

Most of all, the soundtrack. I cannot get over the soundtrack. A Fergie needle drop was used within the first couple minutes of the movie and I hate to say that I loved it. The way that music was used all throughout this movie was so intentional. As mentioned before, Dan's character sings "Seasons of Love" and even now I still break into song randomly because of that. I literally will turn to my friend and sing it because that's how ingrained it is now. The scoring is beautifully executed as well. There are some songs on the *Primetime* score that sound like a panic attack and others that sound like a borderline romance song, and somehow they fit into the movie so well.

Overall, I personally feel like this movie is just something you have to go see for yourself to form an opinion on. The subject matter is just so grey that some people think the movie is complete garbage that should just be burned while others - like myself - left the movie theater blown away. *Primetime* all in all, is, if nothing else, an experience. I can say for sure that I have seen nothing like it before, and I doubt I will see something like this ever again.

On Cornell and Rape Culture in Colleges

What needs to happen until victims are taken seriously?

By Ally Wolken

1 in 5 women and 1 in 18 men are assaulted or raped during their time in college. Terms like "lockerroom talk", "asking for it", and "boys will be boys" only perpetuate the cycle of rape culture. When victims and advocates try to speak out, they are the ones belittled and told they are reading too much into the situation, exaggerating their experience, or told the infamous phrase, "asking for it" rather than challenging the perpetrators.

For too long, college students who have experienced rape, assault, and harassment have been swept under the rug, denied justice or hushed out of fear of a public relations nightmare. However, after an alleged gang rape, a Cornell student–refered to under the pseudonym Jane Doe–filed a civil lawsuit against the university. In the case, Jane Doe says she was drugged and assaulted by seven different Chi Phi fraternity members, now colloquially known as the 'Cornell Seven'. The accused men have denied the allegations. Cornell suspended only two of the perpetrators, meanwhile some were only given a 'reflection paper' to write as their punishment.

The system and processes of reporting rape or assault often favor the accused. Between 2018 and 2024, a total of 1,216 Title IX (law protecting sexual discrimination and harassment victims) complaints were reported to Cornell, and only 14 were seen as culpable and therefore expelled. Others were given less serious punishments, like an essay, which, in itself, disrespects and discredits the victims..

A common sympathy response towards the accused tends to be "they have their whole life ahead of them, this is just one mistake", but many fail to recognize that the victim has or had a life as well, now contaminated with trauma. How much more suffering do victims need to endure until they are taken seriously?

The Cornell case is only the tip of the iceberg of the

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11,000 cases that occur every year, not including the 90 percent of cases that go unreported. Campus assault is not rare, which is why discussions of the risk and criticisms of the Title IX reporting process within most campuses should not be seen as taboo.

Denying someone justice or belief only perpetuates the cycle of rape culture in colleges. The system and processes of reporting rape or assault often favor the accused. Additionally, the process in its entirety is often so difficult and strenuous that many victims drop their case, leaving the accused to live their lives freely. The process of reporting rape and assault usually takes months and even years. While waiting on a case, the emotional toll is never any less than stressful, and constantly recounting traumatic events to describe to police and investigators only serve as a reminder of the suffering. How insulting is it to the victim to withstand everything and only punish their perpetrators with the writing of an essay?

As the Cornell case is still ongoing, many college campuses across the nation, including Cornell, have protested the misconduct of the men, poor disciplinary choices of the school, and rape culture in general. Protests signs read "I am Jane Doe" signifying their solidarity and shared experience with said victim.

However, all of the coverage and social media attention hasn't been entirely positive. Text messages were released showing Chi Phi members practically advertising Jane Doe in a Snapchat group chat of over 50 men, which is what sparked most outrage on both sides of the fence. Posts often mention–despite her being drunk and drugged–that she was aware of what was happening. Some doxxed and harassed Jane Doe's identity maliciously. Others blamed her, saying "she was going to a frat house, what did she think was going to happen?"



It's critical to note that victims of sexual assault do not have to be perfect to deserve your sympathy. What needs to happen until victims are finally taken seriously, especially on a campus setting? If a school's reputation is more important than the 1 in 5 women and 1 in 18 men on campus, then maybe it is time to rescind and transform the way that sexual assault is handled to keep everyone safe. Student safety should be the number one priority of a college. It's time for change in the way that we view and care for victims of sexual assault.

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U.S. to Live-Stream Terrorist's Execution

The United States government is trying to live stream a death penalty

By Blake Wegner

Several members of the United States Government, including President Donald Trump, have advocated for the live-streamed execution of Nidal Hisan, renowned terrorist, on December 3rd by firing squad.

This announcement, to the surprise of no one, has caused an uproar. Pete Hegeseth said on October seventh, "We'll make sure that people are able to watch it; that it's public, because people need to understand there's serious consequences for these types of things."

The announcement has led many people and myself to ask how this is constitutional, and the truth is, it almost isn't. The 8th amendment specifies that there should be no cruel or unusual punishment, and streaming an execution for anyone to see can be perceived as breaking that amendment.

Public executions haven't been done in the United States since the 1930s. Many nations and people online have come out and said that what the United States is trying to do is only something that happens in terrorist nations. The UN Human Rights Office warned that "livestreaming a public execution in the United States would violate the absolute prohibition against torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment."

This livestream being public and online for anyone to watch leads people to fear who will see it. Many people are disgusted by the fact that kids could stumble across a man being shot if they are on an electronic device during the time of the execution.

Even with many people being against this live stream, there are many supporters. In response to critics, they say, "If you don't want to see it, just don't watch it."

Yet, these are the same people who get offended when books that they don't agree with are in schools. Watching an execution by the government is barbaric and can be seen as a future scare tactic.

Nidal Hisan, pictured here.

Since the United States is adding public shame to an execution, it can lead people to think twice before speaking out against an order or the government out of fear of being punished. It can also be seen as the government trying to desensitize the public to hide some wrongdoings in the future.

Now the likelihood of this actually happening is slim because while I was writing this article, Trump posted on Truth Social on October 15th, "I think streaming the execution for all to see might have been a strong deterrent for the World to witness how America deals with Terrorists and SCUM like Hasan, but many very good and well-meaning people would rather not watch him die, through streaming, or through any other visual device."

While it is a great thing that they are not streaming this event, the fact that it was even an option is disgusting. There should be no reason why the government should be showing people how someone will be killed.

This event shows the corruption that happens inside our government and how people will just follow whatever their leader says. No matter what they try to say or try to alter the story; there is no possible way to justify the fact that the U.S. government was going to stream a killing for the world to see.

Ask Jazzy Joan

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Issue No. 4

Dear Jazzy Joan,

I have something to get off my chest, Taylor Swift is garbage

Thanks,
Nada Swiftie



Dear Nada Swiftie,

That's valid...But don't tell anyone I said that...

Keep Magically Thinking,

Jazzy Joan

Submission #21

Dear Audacious Andy,

I am the one who has been covertly replacing the classroom whiteboard markers with completely dried-out ones. I have a box of 50 fresh ones in my locker. I will not stop until my demands for a longer lunch are met.

Thanks, Expo Say



Dear Expo Say,

Wait...how devious. How long do we need said lunch to be.. Because if I stay any longer with food we might have a problem. I have six boxes of Snickers ice cream bars in my freezer and I'm scared what might happen when I have access to them for too long.

Audaciously yours,

Audacious Andy

Ask Audacious Andy