

EDITORIAL

POLICY

The Gleaner is a student newspaper published of

Wahlert Catholic High School
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Its purpose is to inform, educate and entertain the student body; to provide an educational opportunity for those who produce it; and to provide an appropriate forum for student expression.

The Gleaner will not publish material deemed invasive, libelous, obscene, likely to cause material and substantial disruption of school or in violation of copyright laws. An article's accuracy is the responsibility of its author.

The Gleaner welcomes input in the form of letters to the editor. They must be signed and consist of no more than 200 words on a topic pertaining to the Wahlert community.

The editors reserve the right to remove prohibited content and to edit for clarity and length, not meaning.

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Thanksgiving: making up for lost memories

by Ava Hoelscher
of *The Gleaner*

In a regular year, your Thanksgiving table is likely crowded with seats for relatives and an abundance of steaming casseroles to match. But for many, last year looked very different. Some students spent the day with only their immediate family; some were quarantined; many were separated from grandparents and other beloved family members.

People across the country lost memories, opportunities, and loved ones this past year due to COVID-19. This November, many are especially thankful for what life offers them.

Mrs. Becky Varley is excited to spend Thanksgiving with her children, especially after a quiet holiday in 2020.

"Last Thanksgiving was just Mr. Varley and



Turkey time

Josie Wolbers, '24, spent Thanksgiving 2020 with her immediate family and looks forward to seeing extended relatives this year.

me, so I'm very excited," said Varley. "My son who got married is coming back from Maine; I'm hopefully going to have all three of my kids home this year."

She noted that it has not been since Memorial Day that they've all been together. This year more than ever, she's thankful for the opportunity to spend time with her family.

Josie Wolbers, '24, is

mindful of this year's struggles; they impact what she's grateful for this Thanksgiving.

Wolbers stated, "I'm really thankful for my support system. This past year has been a little rough for everyone, so I'm glad I have people there who are willing to help."

She noted that the pandemic had a negative effect on many people's mental

health, including her own. She is thankful for empathy and companionship.

In addition to connecting with others, the increased solitude and independence has allowed students to reflect on their personal growth. Zachary May, '22, is thankful for how his life has changed.

"I'm most grateful for my mental and physical growth this year," began May. "I've grown muscle, yes, but I've also been able to change and grow my mindset."

After a year of isolated holidays and new normals, Varley recognizes how the little things seem more special this Thanksgiving. Varley said, "The distance hurt more than I would've guessed, so I'm happy that we're able to have everyone under the same roof; hopefully, everybody else can do the same."

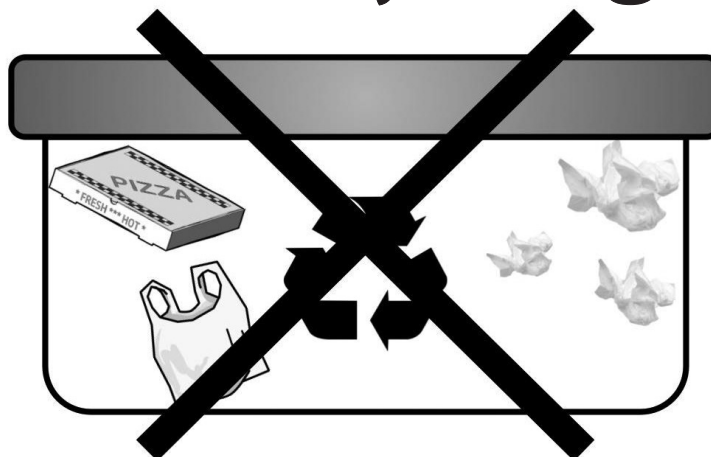
Real talk on recycling

by Jamie Vondra
of *The Gleaner*

Students were flabbergasted to discover that Wahlert has not been recycling recently (see Caroline Slaght's story on the logistics of recycling at Wahlert). These problems mainly stem from maintenance understaffing and student ignorance of recycling rules. So, what is the next step towards fixing this environmental issue?

Student activist clubs including LEAP (Leaders of Environmental Action and Protection) and the Social Justice Club have taken on the issue. First, the clubs are partnering to conduct a waste audit with the local company. In this process, the clubs will request that maintenance leave the garbage next to the bins so that the students can sort the trash into recycling, compost, and trash. From there, they will be able to weigh the different groups to see the amount of recyclable materials being tossed into the trash.

The clubs will then discuss their plan to recycle with the head of the maintenance staff. Initially, LEAP and the Social Justice Club will most likely take on the responsibility of sorting the trash. Then, de-



pending on student interest, the job may be handed off to a new recycling club or mentor groups.

In order to successfully recycle at Wahlert, students must first understand the basics of recycling. The *Des Moines Register* reported that in 2017, "Iowans dumped \$60.3 million worth of recyclable materials into the state's landfills." Therefore, it is very important to understand what can and can not be recycled.

Waste Management (WM) explains myths that often get in the way of successfully helping the environment.

Considering the number of students that consume Bubbl'r each day, it is important that the plethora of cans are properly disposed of. According to WM, unwashed jars and food containers will not be recycled; however, they

do not need to be cleaned spotless. If a container such as a Bubbl'r is not washed, the fruity residue could contaminate other materials. All it takes is a quick rinse.

Additionally, tissues and paper towels are often tossed in the recycling bin. These are both not acceptable items to be recycled because the fibers are not sufficient enough to be made into new products.

As both LEAP and the Social Justice Club have begun to conquer the issue of recycling at Wahlert, it is important to be educated on how to properly recycle. Students placing the wrong items in the recycling bins is a large part of the problem, so we encourage students to do their part.

If you are interested in helping the clubs solve this problem, contact Ms. Korin Schriver, LEAP Club moderator.

Dear Class of 2025

by The Upperclassmen
of *The Gleaner*

As upperclassmen, our role is to guide the freshies and act as good role models. We show them how to walk on the right side of the hall, cheer in the student section, and show respect to everyone.

Transitioning to high school is difficult. Some students handle this change by acting out, whereas others thrive under pressure. As upperclassmen, we noticed individuals taking advantage of our committed teachers. However, we chose to approach this issue in the wrong way. The headline and photo we selected for our October article generalized the entire class as "not-so-fantastic".

From this point forward, we will enact change in the student body by exemplifying respect and growth. As Wahlert Eagles, we are stronger when we are united. Let's finish this year strong.