

Seven students journey to Alabama for national competition

Forensics and policy debate will represent school in Birmingham

BY MIRANDA MOORE
The Booster Redux

The Pittsburg High School forensic team has been busy. In the past month they have hosted a tournament, fine tuned performance for state, and most recently qualified four people for nationals.

“Kids try for four years in high school to get to qualify and we have seven students this year that are making that journey, three of them are seniors and four of them are sophomores,” forensics coach Julie Laflen said.

This past weekend the South Kansas National Forensics League tournament was held at Augusta High School. Haley Uttley and Jason McDonald competed against students from ten other schools and both qualified for the national competition this summer in Birmingham Alabama.

“The best part was being relieved after the final round, having Mrs. Laflen come grab me and saying

‘You’re going to nationals!’” Uttley said.

Uttley qualified in original oration, a persuasive speech, and McDonald in foreign extemp, a speech over foreign relations that only allows thirty/30 minutes to prepare. Joseph Matthew also qualified, but is already attending the tournament in policy debate so passed the spot down. McCauley Windsor placed third in humorous interpretation and was only one point away from placing second and is first alternate.

At a separate national qualifying tournament earlier this year for congress events senior Bryan Stebbins placed first in senate and has a result will also head to Alabama.

All in all PHS will be taking seven students to nationals, four in policy debate and three in forensic events.

“These kids have worked really hard and this is a top honor for them to go to this tournament,” Laflen said.



At a tournament earlier this season, senior Bryan Stebbins prepares a speech over gun control. For Congress Stebbins placed first at that tournament and a few weeks later qualified for the National tournament in Birmingham, Alabama in Senate in Independence. PHOTO BY MIRANDA MOORE

Teenage abuse packs a punch: dating violence

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According to Moss, abuse, both emotional or physical, can occur in any type of relationship, whether it is the male abusing the female or vice versa. However, Moss said that when it is the female abusing the male, it goes under reported because there is “kind of a stigma that they do not want to tell anyone that their girlfriend is hurting them or emotionally being abusive.” Abuse also occurs within same-sex relationships.

“I think the first step [in getting out of an abusive relationship] would be recognizing that ‘okay maybe this isn’t the healthiest relationship for me,’ and seeking help or advice from someone.” Moss said. “Depending on how violent or how significant the abuse is, there are lots of safety measures that people need to take care of and make sure everyone’s protected.”

Moss suggests that if someone is involved in dating violence, they need to tell somebody. Even though everybody’s situation is different, she recommends talking to a parent, a school counselor, a teacher, a coach or someone they can trust that will lead them in the direction to seek more help.

“My advice is to talk to people about it, don’t hide it and don’t be ashamed,” Gallagher said. “It’s not your fault. It’s really easy to get Stockholm Syndrome and think there is a reason there is nothing wrong with it, but it is definitely wrong. Tell somebody about it. If you tell one person then most likely they are going to convince you to tell more people. That is how it was with me, I told one person and they convinced me to tell a bunch of other people, which helped me get out of [the relationship.]”

There are also local resources that people can utilize if they find themselves in a violent situation. Those suffering abuse can contact the SafeHouse Crisis Center of Pittsburg; the Pittsburg State University Office of Violence Response and Prevention; the Kansas Crisis Hotline; and the local police.

Gallagher was fortunate enough to seek help and get out of the relationship without experiencing the damaging effects of abuse and even getting away from negative alternatives. However, other teenagers aren’t as lucky. If teens

don’t look for guidance, violent relationships can lead to higher risk of substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, and further domestic violence, according to loveisrespect.org.

Another problem, Moss says, is that parents and other adults aren’t seeing the violence as an issue. According to loveisrespect.com, 81 percent of parents believe teen dating violence is not a problem or admit they don’t know if it’s a problem.

“I think people would like to think it doesn’t necessarily happen in teenage relationships,” Moss said. “Adults kind of have these blinders on that ‘oh that doesn’t happen, teenage dating is wonderful and lovely,’ but in reality, that is when abuse starts happening. That’s really when a lot of abusive relationships begin and we start to build those patterns is when we are teenagers and we are learning how to have relationships.”

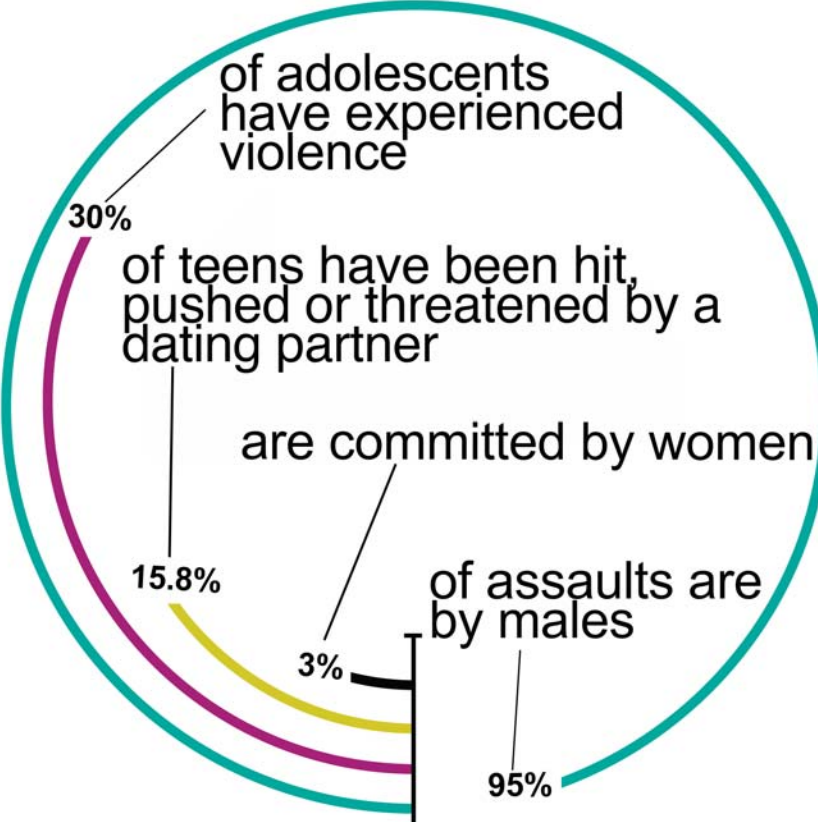
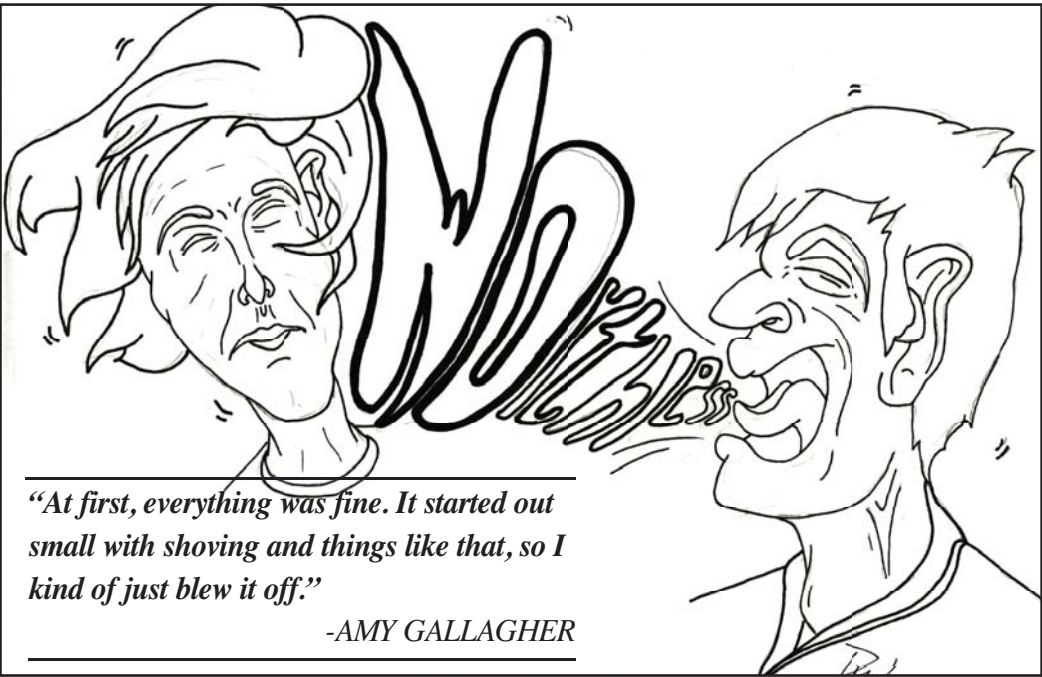
Resource officer Mike Reese also agrees that adults are not aware of how serious dating violence is. He feels that there needs to be better education on the topic for parents and students. Considering there is no law particularly concerning teen violence, he says informing teens would be the best way to prevent it.

“It would be tough to write the wording [for a law] to say that this act is specifically for teen dating violence,” Reese said. “I don’t think there will probably be any laws regarding it, I think if there is violence it would just be charged as battery. I think there should definitely be more education on it though.”

Gallagher reported her abuser to the police and he was later charged with a misdemeanor. She said she hasn’t let what happened in the past control what she is doing now. For example, Gallagher has been in a relationship for almost three years and describes it as “great example of a healthy relationship.”

“It’s never as bad as you think it is, telling people,” Gallagher said. “He or she can threaten you with a bunch of different things but a lot of the time, the bigger the threat is, it’s just to scare you. The healing process wasn’t as hard as I thought it would be and I managed to get over it pretty well.”

Name has been changed to protect the privacy of the student



Performance with a purpose

Repertory theater students put on social issues play

BY KATIE PHALEN
The Booster Redux

The repertory theater class is in the midst of their performance week for their sixth annual social issues play. This year, the class is focussing on the topic of abusive relationships with their show You Belong To Me. The cast gave the world premiere performance on Wednesday morning to an audience of local high school students and an evening show later that night, which was open to the public. Two other performances were given yesterday morning and afternoon for hundreds of other students from area schools. You Belong To Me will be shown for the last times today at 9:00 and 12:30 for two more groups of students, one of which will be the high school student body. The performances for the students are immediately

followed by a question and answer session with the cast that allows the audience to discuss the topic and express their point of view on the issue depicted in the show.

“The social issues play is nothing more than bringing a topic to light and hopefully continuing a conversation,” Theater Director Greg Shaw said. “I am, and most people are, a believer in the fact that theater can entertain, it can educate, and most importantly, it can get people thinking.”

Senior Gracie Spencer, who has performed in three social issues plays, says that these shows are always very unlike the other shows she is in.

“I really like doing these shows because they’re so different than all of the rest of our shows throughout the year, but my most favorite part is getting to perform for the

area schools and also getting to talk to them during the talk back sessions after the show,” Spencer said. “It’s great for other schools to see what we do at PHS.”

To prepare for her role as a victim of relationship abuse, Spencer drew from her own relationship experience, but had to conduct some research in order to portray the part of her role that involved the abuse.

“I’ve actually done a lot of research on signs that someone is in an abusive relationship to know how to act and I’ve also looked on YouTube of videos of girls explaining their personal stories of being in an abusive relationship and that’s helped me a lot.”

The performances given today will be the last of the theater departments for this year.

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to get the material memorized”.

In order to start preparing for nationals, Foresman will be spending her dragon time with Dalton every day to go over her results from state and try to improve her presentation skills. Even though this has been Foresman’s first year with FCCLA, she said that the club itself has helped with her critical thinking and creativity skills over the course of the year.

Accompanying Foresman this year at nationals, will be Malory White, Christian Rossback and Dalton.

“I am very excited to go but I am more excited about the trip itself” Foresman said. “There is a water park we will be going to and we will also be sightseeing the city.”

Applebee’s: Student work

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talking about how Applebee’s has changed and how I’ve helped make that change.”

Parks is the photo editor for the Booster Redux, the Purple and White Yearbook, has also taken pictures for the Morning Sun, and is a part-time videographer. He has won numerous KSPA monthly contests, Parks received an honorable mention in editorial writing at 2012 4A Regionals, and received 3rd place for his commentary writing at the 2012 JEA National Convention. This year, he received an honorable mention in student life photography at the 2013 4A Regionals and will be attending State on May 3, 2013. He received an honorable mention for his photography portfolio through JEA at the National Convention in November 2012.

“My awards reassure me that the work I am doing is quality work,” Parks said. “Seeing other people’s work is at times intimidating and being noticed for the good work that I’ve produced is reassuring.”