



## A LOT OF REASONS TO SMILE AT AHS!

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During our first semester, we had a lot to smile about! We hope our newsletter gives you something to smile about too!



Shaylee, Iris, Josh, Abigail, and Kenny.



Katie, Morgan, and Anna at the Rotary Club luncheon with their advisor, Mel Engen.



The math department learning how to do a TikTok in front of the entire student body.



**A**  
SMILE  
IS THE  
BEST  
THING YOU  
CAN WEAR.

Hello Railroaders,

It has been an exciting first semester at Altoona High School! There are so many *Reasons to Smile*; in the classroom, on the stage, in the hallways, on the fields and courts. If we don't have a group and you are interested in something, we will try to make a group for you. Just this fall, students have created a model building club, a K-pop club (Korean pop music), and a Magic card & video game club. If you are looking to become involved, please ask a teacher/advisor, Ms. Upward, or Mr. Reif. Remember: Railroader Nation belongs to you. Advocate for what you need!

As you look through this newsletter you will see *A Lot of Reasons to Smile at AHS*, but they are also reasons to learn. Whether it is how to be a good teammate, confidence from being on stage, the joy of giving to the community, or discovering something new, we are proud of Railroader Nation having a positive impact on our community. Fruitcakes, IFeeds, Tinkercad, 1920's museums, REO, and Interact Club are just a few reasons to smile, and ways to become involved.

One new initiative is "Who Ya' Got, Altoona?" With students being more isolated in the on-line world, the AHS staff wants students to know they always have a safe person to go to at school. Your child has been encouraged to identify "Who Ya' Got, Altoona?" by telling us which adult at school they want to be there for them. While we realize that their parents are their strongest relationship, it is comforting to know that during the day they can stop in and talk to "their person" or even bring their person into a meeting with the principal. The goal is to make sure that all students have that connection to Altoona High School.

The second semester is in full swing and will give Railroader Nation *A Lot of Reasons to Smile* as new classes, clubs, sports, and activities provide them opportunities to grow. One way we get to show our growth to the whole state of Wisconsin is the ACT Exam. On Tuesday, March 3rd, only juniors will attend school and take the ACT exam and show their Railroader pride. Details will be emailed out.

On a personal note, my first semester at Altoona has been amazing. Hank (our therapy dog) and I could not have found a community more dedicated to helping students achieve their very best in and out of the classroom. The students are considerate, compassionate, and strive to be the best they can be. We are blessed to have found a place in Railroader Nation.

GO RAILS!

Jim Reif  
Altoona High School Principal

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# LOS JEFES (The Bosses)

Some of our **Club de Español** leaders!



## SPANISH II, IV

This semester, Spanish II students learned how to discuss daily life, routines, and shopping phrases when traveling. They compared cultural routines in Spanish speaking countries with American

cultural routines. Also, many found clothing styles and shops to be different in Spanish speaking countries. For Día de Los Muertos, or “Day of the Dead,” many families make “Ofrendas” or altars to honor loved ones who have passed away. Students made their own versions with traditional items to honor someone. They worked hard on decorating their altars and writing eulogies for the person on the altar. Check out some of the winning altars from the classes!



SPANISH II students created these ofrendas.

## ART CLASSES

### Working With One's Hands

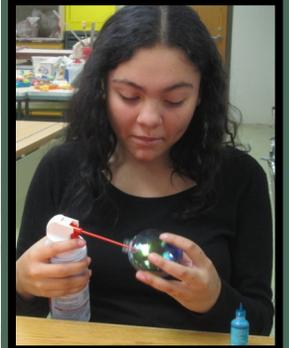
Making something with your own hands is very satisfying. AHS students were given the opportunity to make gifts for family and friends before break, and many students report that "just making stuff" is the best part.

Students also worked in groups to create a sculpture from clear packaging tape which resulted in some interesting installations to use in their photography.

The project is inspired by Mark Jenkins. Mark Jenkins is an American artist who makes sculptural street installations. His practice of street art is to use the "street as a stage" where his sculptures interact with the surrounding environment including passers-by who unknowingly become actors.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Before leaving for break, students enjoyed crafting ornaments. Art continues to be an excellent stress-reliever for many students. In a lot of cases, it's the process of creating; not the finished product, that is reward enough. Although, the finished ornaments were a pretty nice reward for families and friends of our AHS students!





the COMMUNITY TABLE

## ALTOONA HIGH SCHOOL INTERACT CLUB Named Team of the Month by the Community Table

Since 1993, The Community Table has been nourishing hungry bodies and spirits in the Eau Claire Community by serving one meal each day, 365 days a year on a no-questions asked basis.

Anyone can join the table during meal time.

Our team worked with Eau Claire Energy Cooperative to make food and blankets.



## LIGHTS FOR 10th STREET PARK

Interact Club also assisted the Altoona Lion's Club in the decorating of 10th Street Park.

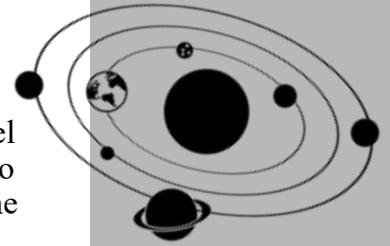




### 9th GRADE SCIENCE

#### Terrestrial and Jovian planets

9th grade students had to construct a model of the solar system that was scaled down to fit in 10 meters to help them understand the reasoning behind the characteristics of the terrestrial and Jovian planets.

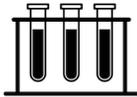


The **Jovian planets** are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. They orbit far from the sun. **Jovian planets** have no solid surfaces and are essentially large balls of gas composed primarily of hydrogen and helium. They are much larger than the terrestrial planets: Earth, Mercury, Venus, and Mars.

### CHEMISTRY

The chemistry classes have been working on learning about ionic bonds and compounds and which ions are formed in the process.

At right, a chemistry student is testing four different water samples to see which ions are present in the water.



**JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT**

*Junior Achievement's purpose is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.*

BELIEF IN THE BOUNDLESS POTENTIAL OF YOUNG PEOPLE

COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPLES OF MARKET-BASED ECONOMICS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

PASSION FOR WHAT WE DO, HONESTY, INTEGRITY, AND EXCELLENCE IN HOW WE DO IT

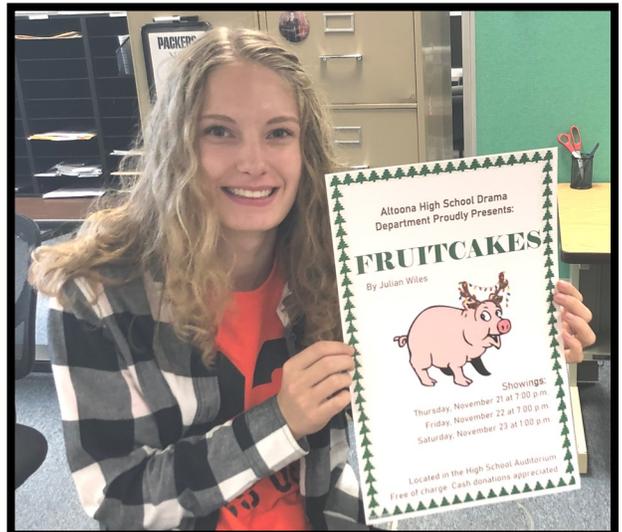
RESPECT FOR THE TALENTS, CREATIVITY, PERSPECTIVES, AND BACKGROUNDS OF ALL INDIVIDUALS

BELIEF IN THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

CONVICTION IN THE EDUCATIONAL AND MOTIVATIONAL IMPACT OF RELEVANT, HANDS-ON LEARNING

**PERSONAL FINANCE**

Former student, Bailey Hawke James, visited Mrs. Ostrander's Personal Finance class. Mr. James explained the process of how to go about getting that first apartment.

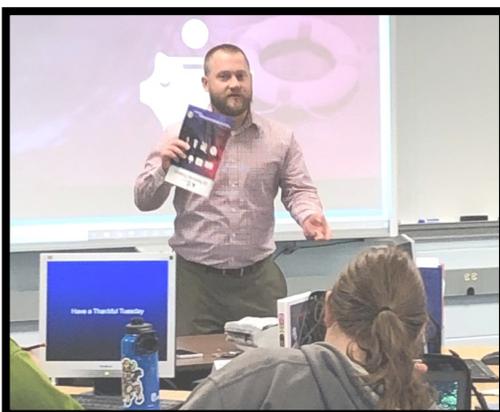


**DESKTOP PUBLISHING**

Each year, Mrs. Ostrander's desktop publishing class has a competition in which students create possible programs and posters for the school play. The play director then chooses the winners.

This year, Lexie's design was chosen as the play program and Keelyn's design was chosen to advertise the play in the hallways.

Congratulations, girls!



Several guest speakers graciously took the time to present great information to our high school students for the Junior Achievement program.

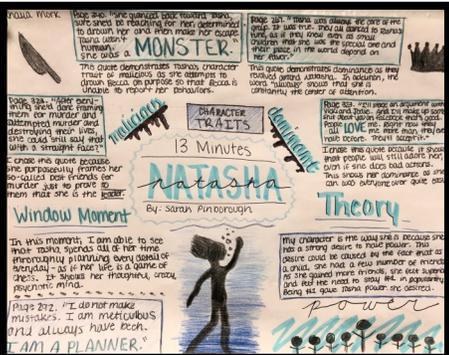
**FROM THE HALLWAY**

**ONE-PAGERS**

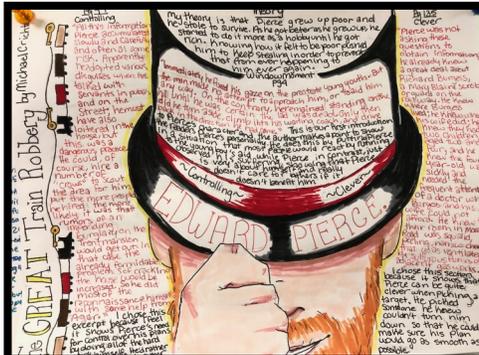
One-Pagers are visual “book reports”. Students produce a single page of sketch notes to represent their book choice’s most important aspects. They not only help students to think critically about what matters most from a text, they also give students a lot of creative options for how to illustrate those highlights.



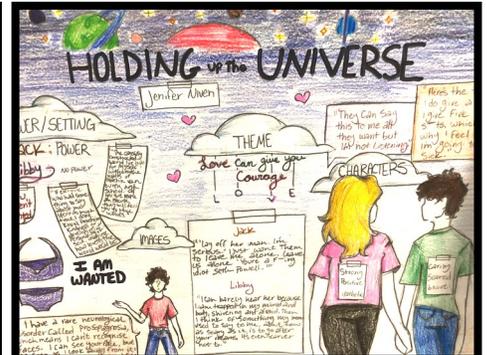
By: Laurie Halse Anderson



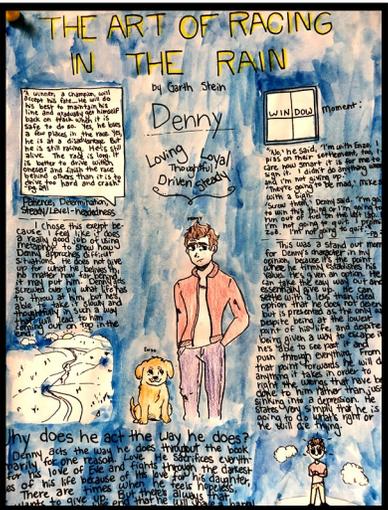
Created by: Kalia Mork



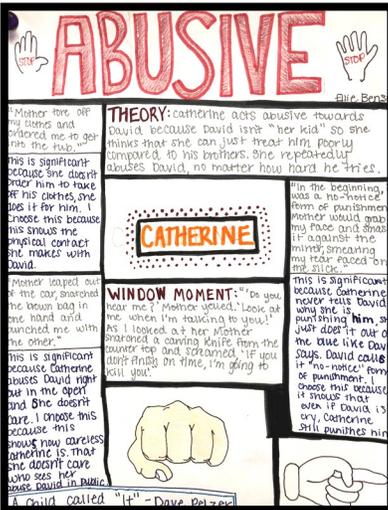
Created by: Ava Anthauer



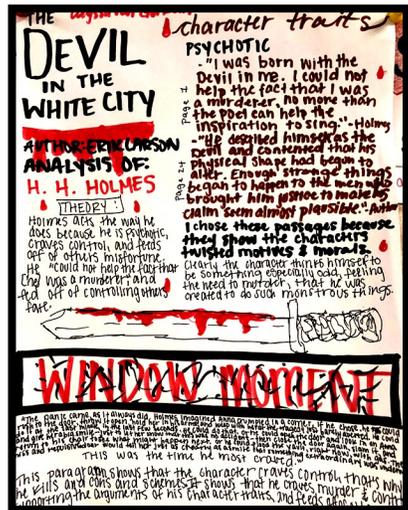
Created by: Lydia Dillaman



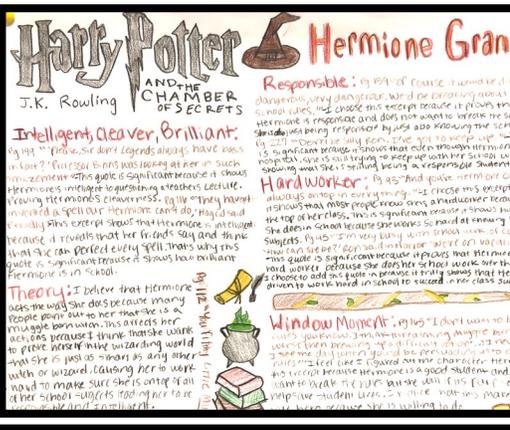
Created by: Kate Golat



Created by: Ellie Benson



Created by: Alyssa van Gorkom



## STUDENT SHOWCASE: BEST IN SHOW

To view the other fantastic entries submitted by our high school students, click here!

**STUDENT  
SHOWCASE**



### THE COLD STARE

By: Makenzie Chmelik

*The look you get  
You almost let it go  
He gives the coldest stare  
That you burn into your memory  
He doesn't like you  
Let that settle into your mind  
He doesn't like you  
The memory burning in your mind  
He gave you a glare,  
Rolled his eyes  
He won't like you  
Let that settle  
He won't  
But still the heart pounds  
And still the lungs fill and empty  
And still is that slimmer of hope  
That hope that drives you  
To be perfect  
You get the coldest stare,  
But still the hope lives on*



Marcos Juarez  
Photography—1st

### HYDE PARK

By: Daeja Loew

A light shinin' in a dark home, the kitchen counter littered with recipes

"Pick one" dad said softly

They baked cake and cookies, the scent still reminiscent in his mind but the name of his father not

Absent of a mothers love, grandma brought him up

He didn't get a say in the way his life was gonna go

He didn't know what it meant to be "down"

His grandma thought he'd make the best of it though



Olivia Midthun  
Artwork—1st



## AHS INTERACT CLUB ATTENDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DANCE

High school students in Mel Engen's Interact Club attended a costume dance at our elementary school. It was a great way for teens to interact with a much younger age group, while the children enjoyed interacting with the "cool older kids".

## ALTOONA HIGH SCHOOL 1ST PLACE WINNERS

Police sirens and gang tyrants juxtapose

Maya with the box braids and the water hose

She lived in the brick apartment complex down the road, she was his only hope

Childhood friends they remember hot summers and gentle embraces, bikes racin' fast past beautiful dark faces, street corners, family mourners, marketplaces, water gushing from fire hydrants makin' their own rainbows

That night on the complex steps when he held her hand and they kissed

Back then was ignorance and that ignorance was bliss

Street lights about to come on, his grandma's voice sayin' "don't be gone long"

He wishes he could remember Maya's face, he wishes he could forget this place

Blinded by emotions of a black man's pain, don't speak up though, because black mothers and fathers teach us that silence keeps you sane

Every night before bed he says "Raise me up to be a good father to my daughter, whose name I can't remember."

Baby mama had her abortion last december, he feels the pain of other people, susceptible to the chains of his birth, trying to climb the steeple

Churches preach the opposite of what he sees, pastors masquerading as leaders

"Dry your eyes my child, you can't cry my child.

Be a man, try and try the best you can to protect your family."

Is it really God he seeks?

Beer bottles and blunts scattered across the kitchen counter, couch lock got em' tired for hours and hours

He can rebuild this place but he'll never forget the bittersweet taste of poverty and pennies from the blood of his fist fights for happiness and the American Dream

Blast the rap music "Cash Rules Everything Around Me" CREAM, never forget the rose that grew from concrete, scream at the top of his lungs to be seen.

What have you heard? Speak the truth without the words, he runs to Hyde Park to calm his nerves.



Logan, Ms. Nelson, and Carlos enjoying a fun day out at the Pablo Center.



The cleaning/training crew at a new vocational skills site, Anytime Fitness, with owner Jon Haag.

### TRANSITION STUDENTS

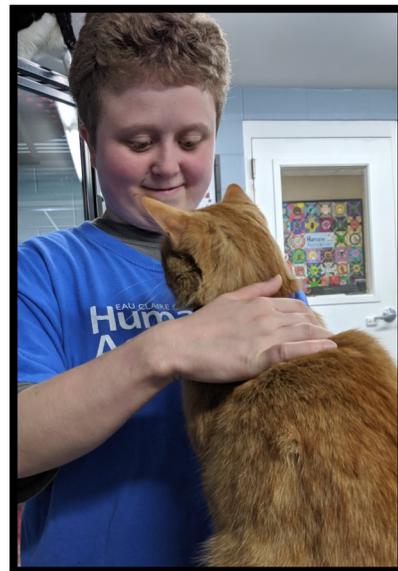
Transition students work hard all week on vocational skills throughout the community.

Places where the students practice vocational skills are **Anytime Fitness, Hope Gospel Mission, Grace Adult Day Services, Eau Claire Humane Assoc., Metropolis Resort, and St. Francis Food Pantry.**

On Fridays they focus on job shadowing, and a variety of fun experiences.



Brooke at the YMCA, job shadowing a Zumba instructor.



Faith and Hannah.



## SPECIAL EDUCATION

Amanda Mussehl  
Angela Nelson

### RAILROADER ENTREPRENEUR OPERATIONS



Jack learning the ins and outs of the business world. Here, he is detailing a car.



**REO** is the new and upcoming business here at Altoona High School.

**Railroader Entrepreneur Operations** is a transition class that is giving students with IEP's hands on opportunities to learn the ins and outs of the business world.

**REO** is currently serving popcorn at AHS on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons during RAILtime, in addition to operating a staff car detailing business!



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If you have a possible opportunity for transition students, please contact Amanda:

**AMANDA MUSSEHL**  
Altoona High School  
Transition Coordinator  
[amussehl@altoona.k12.wi.us](mailto:amussehl@altoona.k12.wi.us)  
715-839-6031 ext. 454



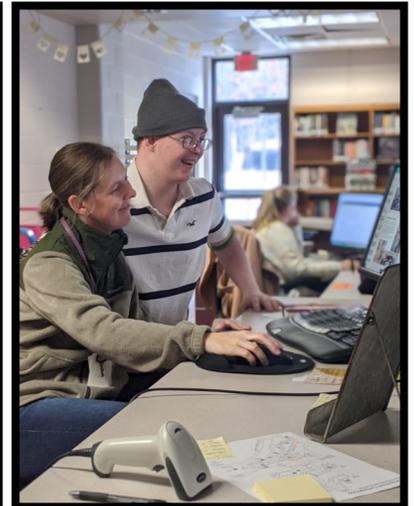
Dante filling shelves at St. Francis Food Pantry.



Blake and Hannah give thumbs-up approval for "Duude", the new student turtle adopted for Mr. Riehbrandt's room.



Brooke, Logan, Zander and Matthew surprise their boss, Jerry from the food pantry, with Deutsch Family Farm bacon, because who doesn't love bacon?



Lee working on the high school newsletter with Mrs. Thiede.

# SHARK TANK

## MARKETING

Marketing students worked hard to produce new products to try and fix modern day problems—from products that helped people sleep or drink more water, to just generally making our lives easier, like preparing food.

Every product idea was pitched to a panel of sharks. The sharks talked through the pros and cons of each idea, while students explained, convinced, and tried to sell their ideas in a persuasive way. There are certainly some salesmen in this group! But ultimately, the most creative concept won the day. The group that was able to convince the sharks to put the most cash behind their idea received the extra credit points.



Two of the sharks, Mrs. Thiede and Mrs. Ostrander, debate the merits of a proposed product.



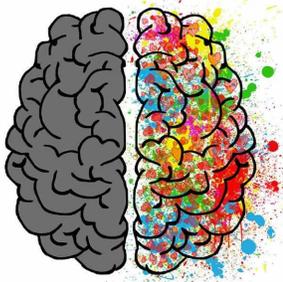
Ray Marczinke pitches his product: The TemPillow, a pillow which has the capability to either heat or cool.



## FITNESS



Show Choir leading a workout.



### AP PSYCHOLOGY

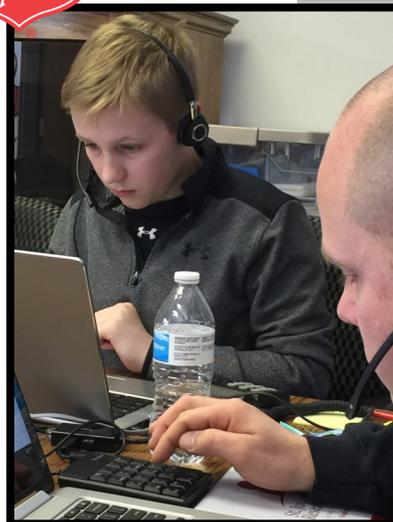
In a “split brain” scenario, students in AP Psych are simulating a patient who has had their corpus callosum severed.



Jackson and Riley attempt to make a paper airplane, and Connor and Aiden attempt to tie a shoe.



### AHS STUDENTS SERVING THEIR COMMUNITY



Interact Club member Nich Engen volunteering during the St. Jude's Telethon.



## TINKERCAD

As the result of a grant, Altoona High School received a Dremel 3D printer. Desktop publishing teacher Mrs. Ostrander was the first teacher to take advantage of the new technology. Her students created designs using Tinkercad.

Tinkercad was created by a former Google engineer, with a goal to make 3D modeling accessible to the general public. Tinkercad is a popular platform for creating entry-level models for 3D printing in schools. It also includes a feature to export 3D models to Minecraft Java Edition.

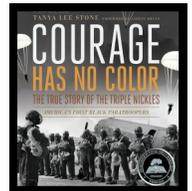


Designs by desktop publishing students.



## AHS LMC HOSTS AUTHORS

Sarah Aronson, author of the picture book *Just Like Rube Goldberg*, encouraged students with a message about creativity and writing. When she's excited she talks with her hands, as seen at left!



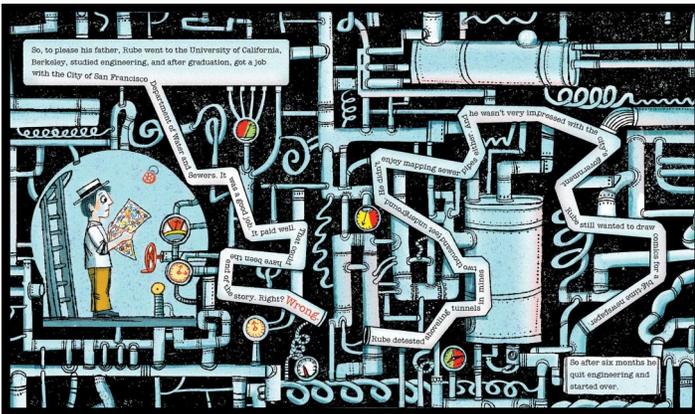
Tanya Lee Stone brought a message of social action and also great advice for our budding high school writers. Tanya's writing reveals a passion about telling the unsung, true stories of people who have been left out of our histories, like *Almost Astronauts*, *Pass Go and Collect \$200*, and *Courage Has no Color*.

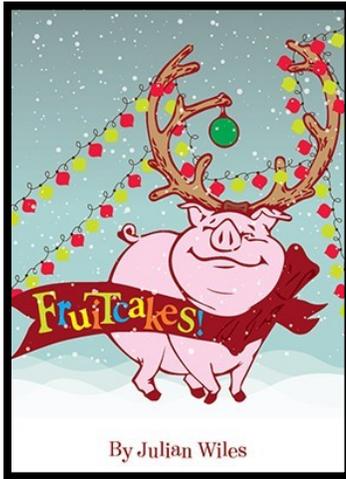
## AHS BOOK CLUB

CURRENT BOOK: THE BONE HOUSES



ANY BOOK  
YOU HAVEN'T READ  
IS A NEW BOOK





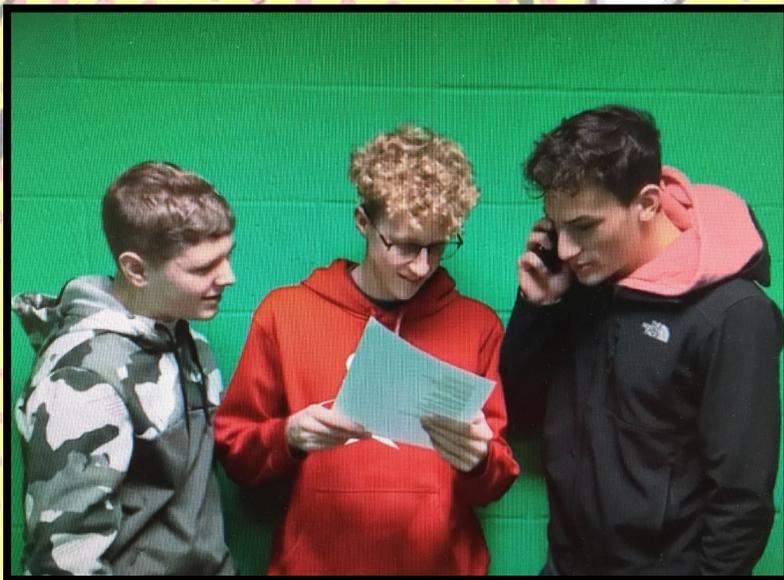
Mix together a batch of fruitcakes, three dozen Christmas trees, a chicken pox epidemic, 10,000 outdoor Christmas lights, an estranged old man, two spinsters, and a Christmas hog named Buster and you've got the recipe for a great school play filled with holiday cheer.

Into this world comes Jamie, a kid who has run away from home as far as his money could take him. At first, he thinks this town's inhabitants are "nuttier than fruitcakes", but soon he comes to appreciate the nutty little town. A moving story of alienation, understanding, and reconciliation.





Papel picado.



## SPANISH VIDEOS

Spanish III students used the green screen equipment to complete a movie project. Gavin, Logan, and Blend, at left, are filming in front of a green background. Below left, the girls have inserted a picture into the background of their video, to replace the green background.

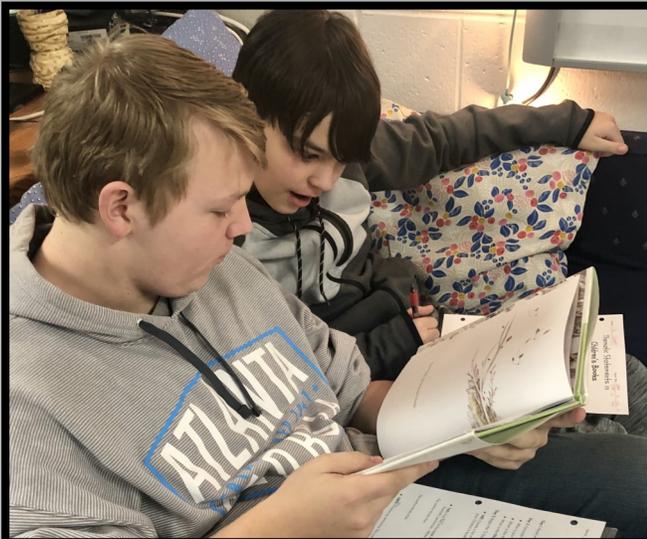
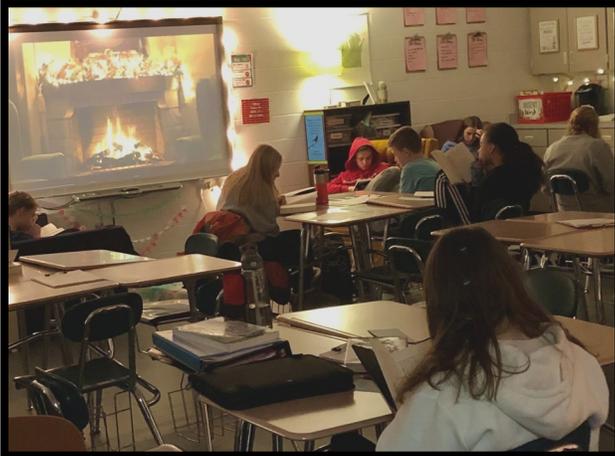


# COZYING UP WITH A GOOD BOOK

## ENGLISH 9



English 9 students get to choose a “free read” book of their choice and get daily choice reading time in class every day!



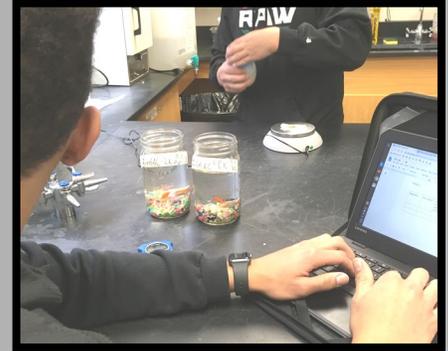
### BOOK STUDY: SOCIAL JUSTICE

As a way to practice writing thematic statements in our social justice book study, we paired up to create thematic statements for children’s books.

# SCIENCE

The science department strives to have students practicing science through inquiry experiments. Students act like scientists by deciding their own problem statements, setting up their experiments and collecting data, and using statistical tools to analyze their data.

Each month, student lab reports will be featured on the school website. Look for the link: Coming soon!



AP Biology students working on a photosynthesis lab.

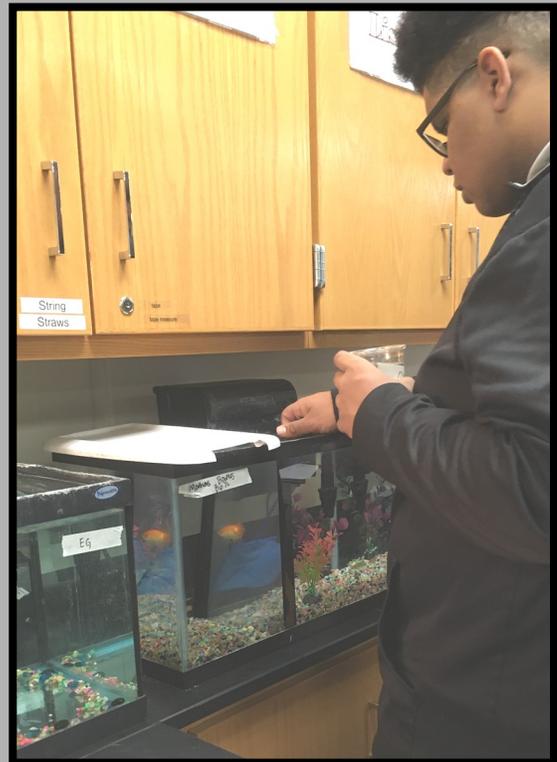
## DATA COLLECTION

AHS students spend a considerable amount of time collecting data for science class experiments.

**Biology and Anatomy & Physiology** students collect data at school, while **ecology** students visit area natural areas for data.



Biology students working on their goldfish experiments.





# SPANISH TRIP

Students have been selling bracelets for their trip to Costa Rica at games. Pura Vida bracelets in Altoona colors are still available if you are interested in buying one! The sale of the bracelets will help support fund raising efforts.



# SPANISH CLUB

Spanish Club's taco potluck in the month of October was to celebrate National Taco Day and Hispanic Heritage Month! Students enjoyed the tacos and winning prizes from Hispanic Heritage BINGO!



**SPANISH**

Jenna Baxter  
 Melanie Engen

**SPANISH**

**SPANISH I, III, IV**

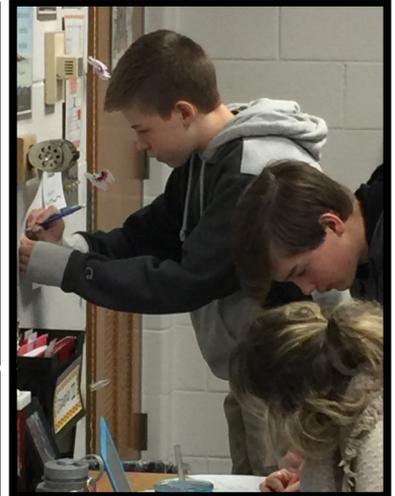
**Spanish I** students learned the card game: ‘manos nerviosas’ (nervous hands) when learning numbers and making a doctor’s eye chart.



**Spanish III** students played ‘los olimpicos’. Team Greta, Sarah, and Sydney were champs!

**Spanish IV** students had a class honoring simulation where each student wrote something they appreciated most in their classmates. The class shared these phrases with each other on traditional “papel picado”. Papel picado is a traditional Mexican handicraft always present in any celebration that involves sheets of tissue paper with patterns cut out on them.

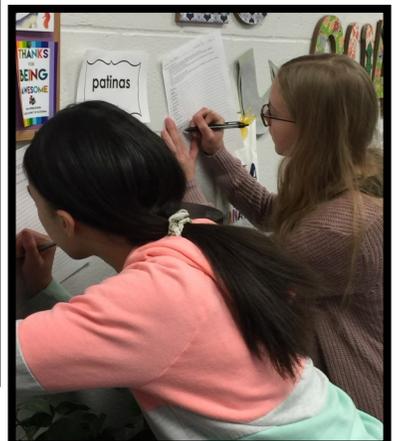
By far, the favorite activity in class is watching and discussing segments of an authentic TV series from Spain..



Winners of ‘los olimpicos’.



Amanda and Payton learning by using a doctor/patient eye chart.



Spanish I students working on verb conjugations.

## PARTNERING TO END HUNGER

Feed My People Food Bank has been working to solve two problems: Hunger and food waste. Over two million pounds of food was rescued and connected with those in our community who needed it in 2018, thanks to the generosity of retail partners. In addition, partnership with over 200 hunger-relief programs in west central Wisconsin made the crucial distribution end possible.

### IFEED

Students helped pack 35,000 pounds of food in the AHS gym to be sent out to those in need in our community.



Packing cereal for weekend meals programs.



## ONLINE CLASSES

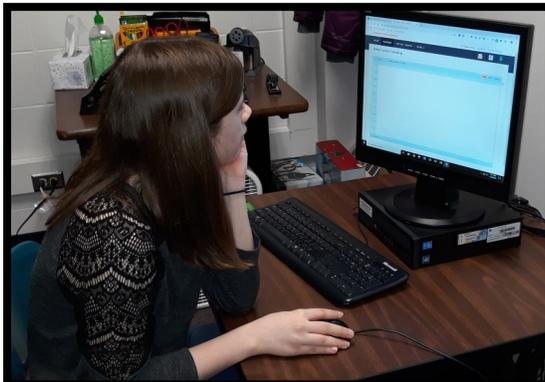
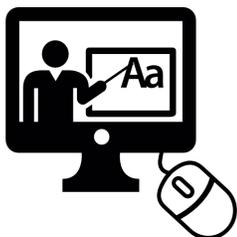
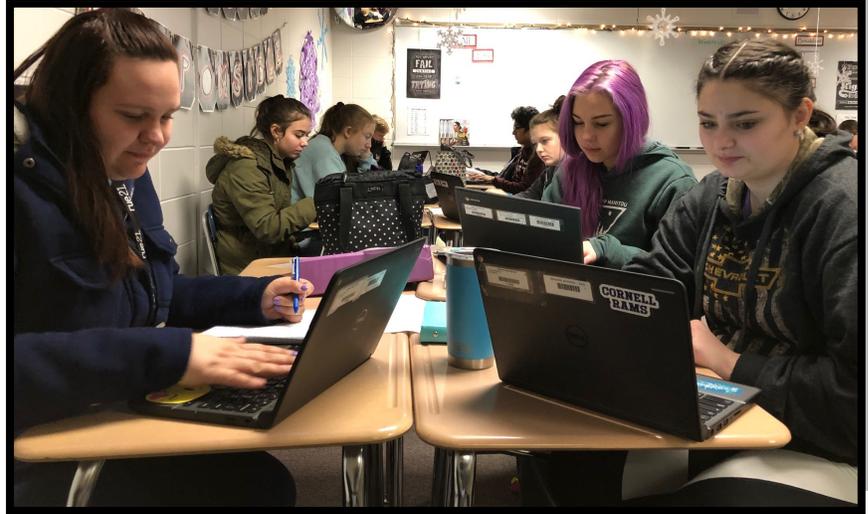
Mary Gonstead

### FALL 2019-2020 ONLINE CLASSES

This Fall has been a great semester for the online learners! Altoona High School has had 59 students enrolled in approximately thirty different courses. Several students have finished more than one online class this semester!

Students are studying several different languages, such as: German, French, American Sign Language, Japanese and Latin. Others are delving into elective subjects like: Game Design, Environmental Science, Intro to Law, Sports Management, and Marine Science, to name a few.

Students are working, for the most part, independently during the day and communicating with their offsite teacher as needed. Online learning is a great way to explore subjects not offered in the traditional classroom!



# ART CLASS

Abigail Hager



Here, Hailey Titel is working with clay. Students were asked to create a mask that accentuates an element of nature, or a mood.

Zach Howell



Ashlynn Carney  
Clay



Savannah Renderman making holiday inspired candle holders.

# REALISTIC PORTRAITS

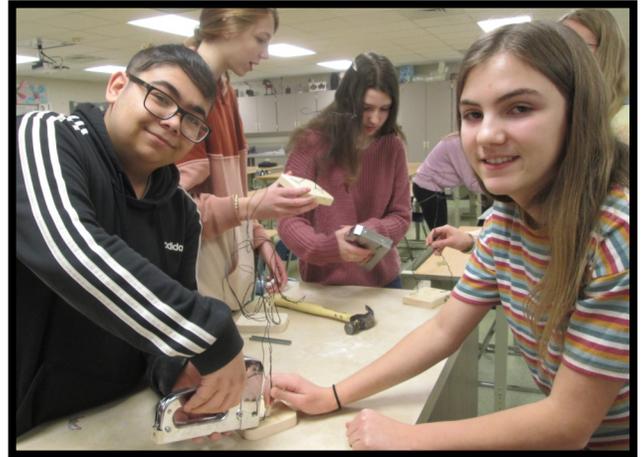
The learning target for these impressive portraits was to practice shading and making a value scale, as well as practice drawing individual parts of the face.



Jackie Halverson  
Pencil



Olivia, Olivia, and Juliah.



Derrick, Olivia, Olivia, and Camryn.



Sophie Gonstead  
Giacometti Wire Sculpture



Drew, Isaiah, Angie, and Ivy.



Engen Rail time playing Catch Phrase.

# ALTOONA HIGH SCHOOL



Principal, Jim Reif  
711 7th Street West  
Altoona, WI 54720

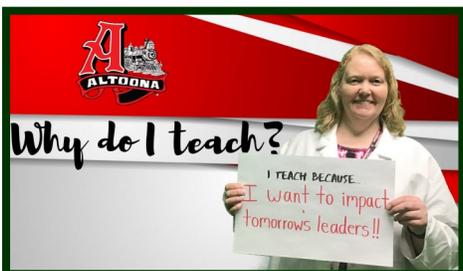
Phone: 715-839-6031  
Fax: 715-839-6028

## Home of THE RAILROADERS

Cover, photo credit:  
Feller, Patrick. "Deck Truss." *Wikimedia Commons*, 14 Feb. 2010,  
[commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Deck\\_truss.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Deck_truss.jpg) and Icons Etc.

The newsletter was created by Amy Thiede, with contributions from the high school staff.

Mrs. Harp



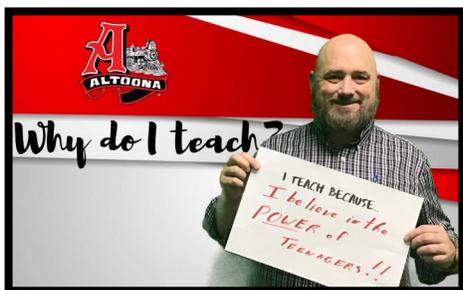
Mrs. Anderson



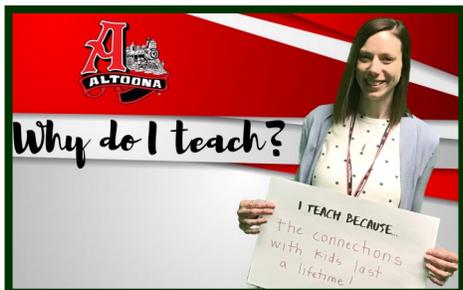
Mrs. Weinmeister



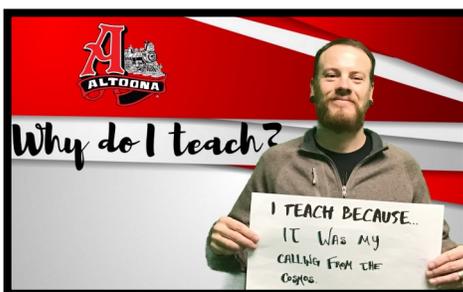
Mr. Reif



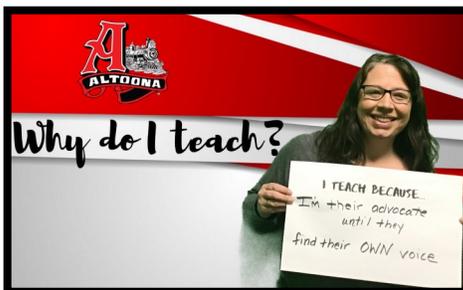
Mrs. Lynnes



Student Council raised over \$1,400 for A Time to Share this year!  
We're honored to be a part of this great community event each year!



Mr. Curry



Ms. Nelson

Students,  
THANK YOU,  
FOR  
GIVING US  
**A** REASON  
TO SMILE.  
The Teachers.