



MAGIC INK

May, 2025

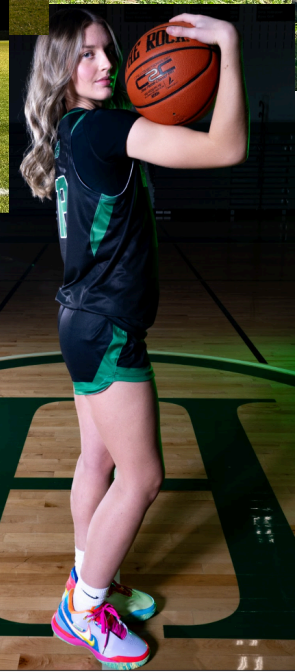
Full Edition #4

Herkimer High School

A Magical Year in Review

Magic Moments

This year was packed with awesome moments! The spring musical *FOOTLOOSE* was a **HUGE SUCCESS**, people are still talking about how amazing the cast and crew were. Sports teams across the board had strong seasons, especially track, cross country, and basketball, where students gave it their all and made Herkimer proud, with records being broken and wins being secured! We had tons of fun outside the classroom too, with field trips, spirit weeks, a bunch of pep rallies, assemblies, and our 2nd annual school-wide social media challenge. And now, we're heading into an exciting end to the year—Kindness Day is coming up on May 22, prom is May 31 (with the Grand March beforehand), and Graduation for the Class of 2025 is set for June 27. It's been a busy year full of energy, memories, and Herk pride, it really flew by!

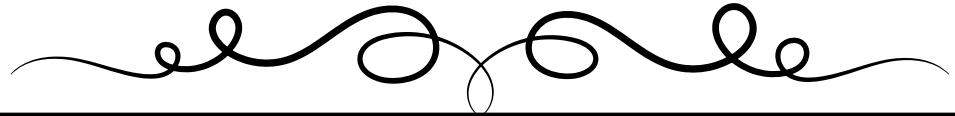


Influential Teacher

Mrs. Wolanski



Mrs. Wolanski was recently chosen as teacher of the month for being an academic role model. She feels very honored to have revived this. She teaches algebra extended for 9th and 10th graders, pre-calc and calculus for 11th and 12th graders, and personal finance for 12th grade. She says she likes having the opportunity to teach every grade in high school and have the variety that comes with it. After 25 years of teaching Mrs. Wolanski makes math engaging by using a variety of lesson activities, lost of color coding, and not giving homework (except for the calc and pre-calc students). She also makes a great effort to connect with her students by doing things like bellringers, talking and relating to her students and simply having fun. Students enjoy having Mrs. Wolanski because she makes an effort to get to know all her students and is very involved in the school. She has even kept in touch with a few students she's impacted over the last 3 years!



Mrs. Wolanski chose senior Sydney Bell as a student she's influenced. Sydney has taken both pre-calc and calculus with Mrs. Wolanski. Math has always been one of her favorite subjects because it had always been easy for her, however as she began taking more challenging math classes she started to dread going to math class. This changed when she had Mrs. Wolanski for pre-calc because she would make her excited to come to class everyday. Sydney likes Mrs. Wolanski because she is very generous and understanding, while also being a great teacher. She makes the most challenging subjects worthwhile. Mrs. Wolanski has impacted Sydney in many ways but one in particular is how understanding and caring she is. This impacted her because she has always been willing to help her students with any problem that may arise, and check in on them or try to help when they are overwhelmed. Sydney says Mrs. Wolanski is definitely her favorite teacher, and plans on attending the University at Buffalo in the fall for Biochemistry.



Senior: Sydney Bell

The Pros and Cons of TikTok Challenges in Teen Life Today



Follow back

What Are TikTok Challenges?

TikTok challenges are short, engaging activities that users participate in by creating videos around a specific theme or task. They often involve dancing, lipsyncing, or showcasing unique talents. Challenges can go viral, with millions of users worldwide joining in. For instance, the GlowUpChallenge allows teens to share their personal growth stories.

Pros of TikTok Challenges

PROS



CONS

Creativity and Self-Expression: Challenges provide a platform for teens to show their talents and creativity. Whether it's through dance, art, or storytelling, students can express themselves in unique ways.

Community Building: Participating in challenges fosters a sense of belonging. Teens connect with others who share similar interests, creating supportive online communities.

Skill Development: doing various challenges can help teens develop new skills, from video editing enhancing their digital literacy.

Pressure to Conform: The desire to participate in trending challenges can lead to peer pressure, with some teens feeling compelled to join in to fit in.

Time Consumption: Spending excessive time on creating and watching challenge videos can detract from academic responsibilities and real-life interactions.

Mental Health Concerns: Constant exposure to curated content can impact self-esteem, as teens may compare themselves to the idealized versions presented in videos.

Conclusion

TikTok challenges have undeniably become a significant part of teen culture in 2025. They offer opportunities for creativity, community, and skill development. However, it's essential for students to engage mindfully, balancing online activities with academic and personal well-being. As trends like these continue to shape school culture, they highlight the evolving ways in which technology influences social interactions and personal identity.

SUMMER BREAK

CROSSWORD

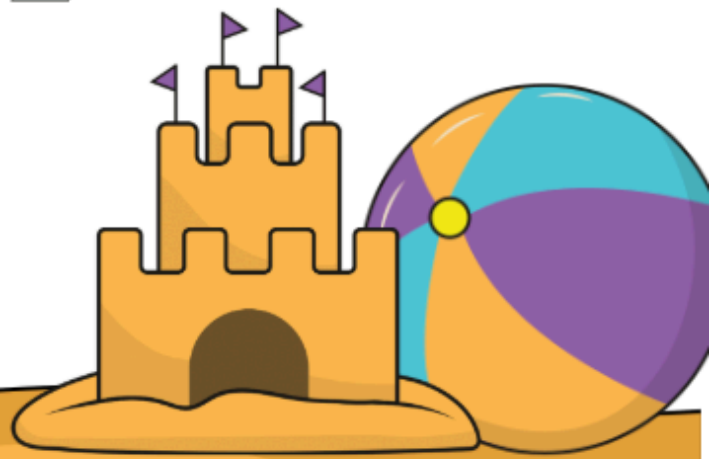
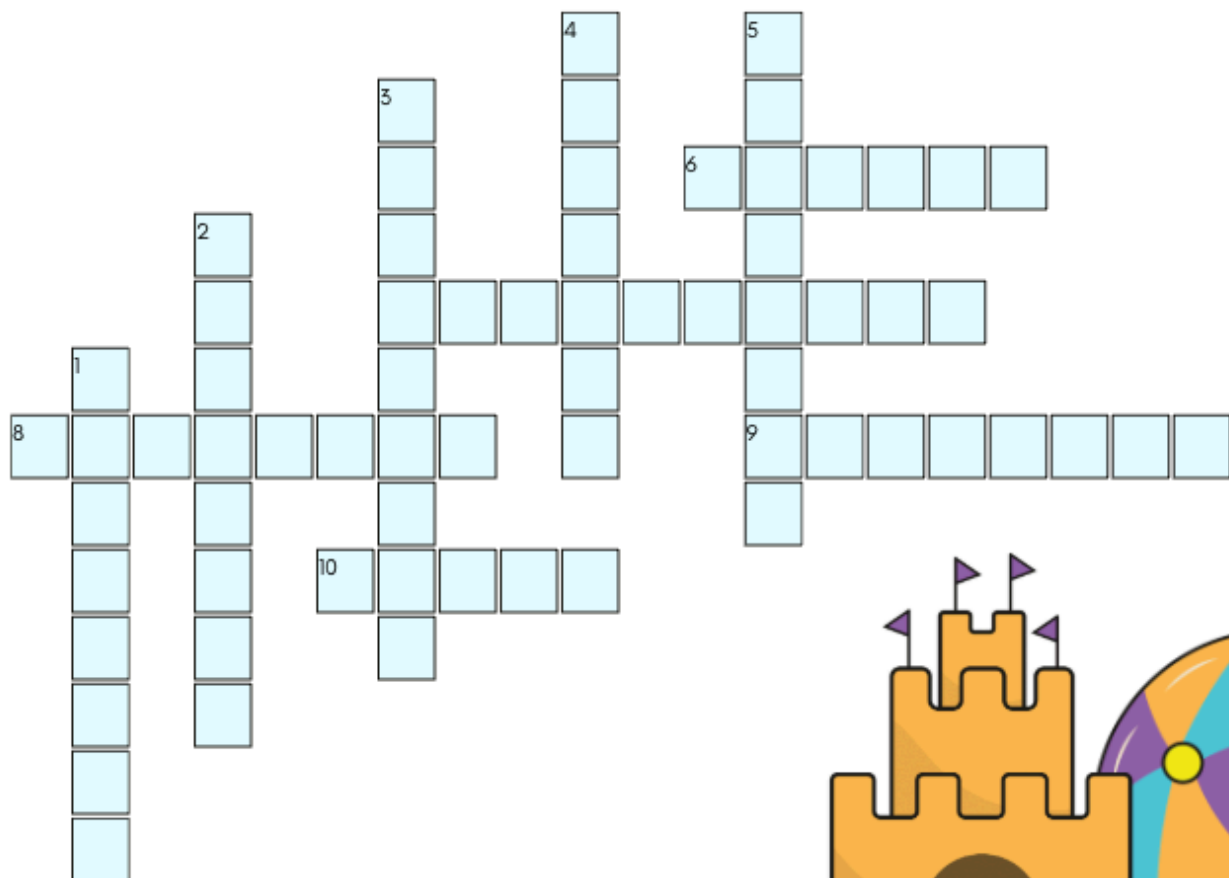
Find 10 words related to the summer break.

DOWN

1. A meal where food is cooked outside on a grill.
2. Open sandal that you wear on your feet, usually in the summer.
3. A cream or lotion you put on your skin to keep it safe from the sun.
4. A time when you travel for fun or take a break from school or work.
5. Clothes you wear for swimming or playing in the water.

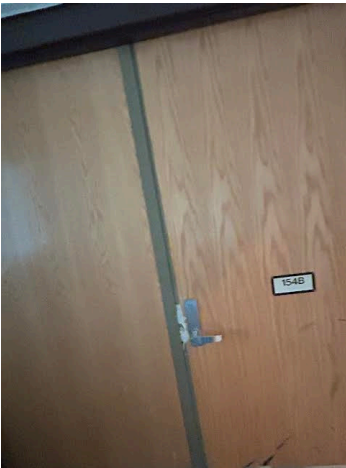
ACROSS

6. A trip where you take food to eat outside, usually on a blanket.
7. A structure made of sand that kids build on the beach.
8. A fire to sit around usually while camping.
9. A sweet, frozen treat made from flavoured cream.
10. A sandy or rocky place by the ocean, sea, or lake where people go to have fun.

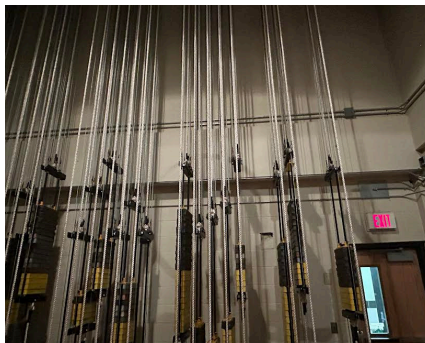


Behind the Curtain: Secrets of the Stage

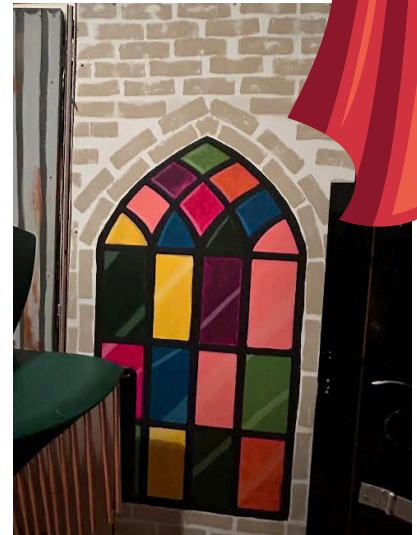
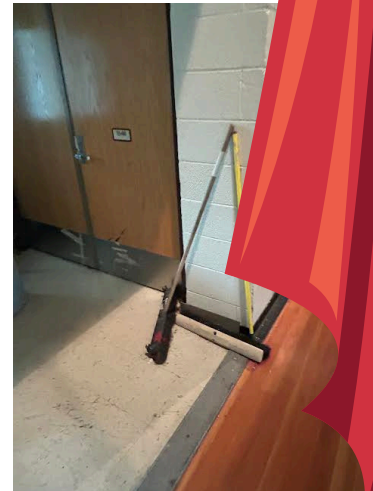
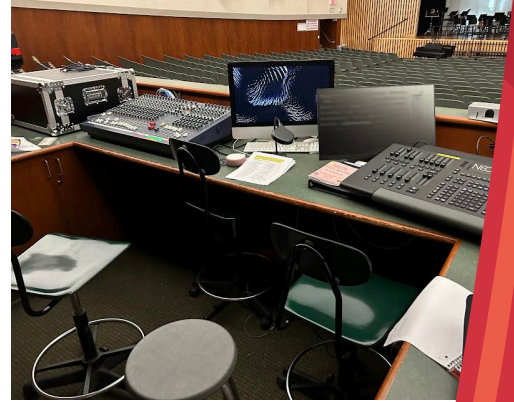
I shouldn't even be talking about this place. Its too top secret to be talking about it. This place is a cousin of the harnesses. It holds everything up. Except they use the latest technology. Lights back and on the stage are powered by this place. Many people fill in this spot. Legend has it that one man, known by the name of Russel Staph, controls the lights of each musical production that takes place for at least 3 years. But many others also fill this area. I have even gone in once. But only once. This place is only for the most experienced men and women in black.



These are the guards of the wooded and "dusty" scenery. They make sure there is not a single piece of dust and grime anywhere to be seen even in showtime and rehearsal. From both exits of the stage, these guys sure give a "dirty" effort with their work! For up to about 5 hours, these guys will be around the clock and in constant motion. Mostly only the men in black can handle and have complete control over these guards, but for a severe enemy of cleanliness, any man or woman can handle it.



The harnesses hold the entire stage together. Literally! Do not let these strings deceive you. You may want to pull on them. However, they hold very hard and heavy bricks. These bricks are so powerful that they could puncture a hole in the stage by a single mistake of dropping it. And that's only one brick. Imagine holding 16 on one rope! They control items that need to be lifted or lowered. Such as the clock from Cinderella and the sun from The Lion King. Never take them lightly. Although they may not stir now, one could move at any time.



This is a recovered and ruined artifact from the musical in 2025. This artifact never left the stage yet. It was luck that allowed me to even be able to take a proper photograph. In future years, this will probably turn into a useless piece of wood for the next musical to come. As have all of the others. Even this artifact alone has been a remembrance of older musicals that have been performed in the past. But even if this turns out to be another piece of a new musical, we still remember this musical through memory and love.

This is the costume closet. Also known as sector 154B. Hundreds of specific artifacts are left in this closet, From sashes to dresses, to amazingly crafted costumes can be found in this room. And not only that, the joy of wearing these outfits is stored in this very small room. However, that does not mean that the joy will last forever. The closet stays shut for about 179 days a year. And only specific members of a club can even go into this mysterious closet. All you must do is offer to be in a musical, and your dreams and wishes of trying perfect clothing will be complete.

Magical ADVICE

Me and my best friend of five years have been fighting a lot recently over everything imaginable. And we never seem to see eye to eye anymore. I don't know if I should just talk to her or end our friendship. What should I do? - CK

Hey CK,

Ah, the classic “best friend turned sparring partner” situation. You two used to be peanut butter and jelly, and now it’s more like oil and water with chill flakes thrown in. It’s frustrating, confusing, and frankly, exhausting to fight with someone you used to be so synced up with.

1. Don't Rush To a Conclusion

Don't rush to toss a five year friendship in the trash just because you're stuck in a season of arguments. Every relationship whether it's romantic, platonic, or that weird one you have with the neighbor next door that you always awkwardly smile at, goes through rough patches. Conflict doesn't always mean the end. Sometimes it just means something needs a shift.

2. Talk Face To Face

If the fights are nonstop, toxic, or leaving you emotionally drained, it's time to hit pause and talk, not text, because emojis can't do justice to tone. Ask her for a calm conversation, not a WWE match. Start with “I” statements, not “You always...” because nothing says “let's fix this” like not blaming her for the extinction of dinosaurs and your bad Tuesday.

3. Dig Deep

Try to figure out what's actually underneath all the bickering. Is it stress? Jealousy? A silent resentment that's brown louder over time? Be honest, even if it's awkward. If you talk and things still feel one sided or unresolved, then maybe the relationship has naturally run its course. And that's okay too. Not all chapters are meant to last forever.

Bottom line? Talk before you walk. Give the friendship a real chance to breath. Worst case scenario? You gain closure. Best case? You rediscover why she was your ride or die in the first place.

With empathy and just a sprinkle of sarcasm,
The Anonymous Writer

Magical ADVICE

I've been dealing with bullying for about four months now and it's not getting any better. I've tried everything I can think of to stop it but nothing is working. I'm getting restless. What should I do to stop the bullying? - AW

Hey AW,

First off, I want to say you are not alone in this situation, even though it probably feels like you're on your own private episode of Survivor: High school edition, but no money prize and a whole lot more hallway drama. Let's get real for a second, bullying sucks. You've already done something brave by trying different ways to handle it and by reaching out to me. That takes guts, like boss level kind of courage.

Now, here's some advice from yours truly:

Document Like a Detective

This may seem a bit ridiculous but it will help in the long run. Write down who, what, when, where, and exactly what happened. If possible screenshot or save messages. Not because you are going full Sherlock Holmes, but because evidence can really help when talking to someone in charge. Solid receipts.

Find The People Who Will Support You

You don't need a full Avengers squad, but find at least one trusted adult in your life (teacher, counselor, family member) and let them in. You've tried handling this solo. Now it's time to call in backup. You're not being a snitch, you're protecting your peace.

Build an Invisible Shield

Okay, not literally but mentally. Think of every nasty thing they say as bouncing off your invisible shield. You don't have to believe the garbage someone else is throwing, especially when it says more about them than it ever will about you.

Lastly Know This: It Won't Always Be Like This

I know it feels like this is your whole world right now. But the world is so much bigger than school, and your life is so much cooler than these small minded people.

And Finally: If you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or like this is too much, please talk to someone about it. You don't need to carry it alone.

You're doing better than you think AW. Keep going.

With high fives and serious support,
The Anonymous Writer

Creative Writing: **When Autumn Came**

By: Anonymous

In the small town of Herkimer, it's the last few days of summer for students, and they are getting ready for their first day of school. Autumn is coming day by day, with leaves floating through the air, back-to-school signs on every store, and the smell of fresh, crisp leaves throughout the town. Bella is very excited for her first day of junior year to see all her friends again. She went to the mall to get new clothes and started to practice cheerleading since she was the team captain. Then she got home to get ready for bed.

"Bella, dinner is ready!" yelled her mom. Bella ran downstairs and ate dinner until she was full. She finally brushed her teeth, washed her face, and went to bed.

RING RING RING! Her alarm clock rang very loud until she jumped out of bed, got ready for school, and finally left her house. Bella walks to school every day since her house isn't far, and she takes the same path each time. As she was walking through a little patch of woods, she came across a creature that wasn't scary—but confusing-looking. She was terrified, as this creature came out of nowhere and was so unexpected on such a nice sunny day.

Bella ran home crying and slammed open the door to her house, awakening her mom from her sleep. Her mom was very confused as to why Bella came home, so she asked, "Bella, what happened? You were so excited for school. Did someone bully you?"

Bella looked at her mom as if she had seen a ghost and stood there, silent and frightened.

Her mom yelled at Bella to stop, but Bella just continued to stare and look terrified.

"I saw something I don't think I should have seen," Bella finally said.

As her mom tried to ask question after question, Bella wouldn't answer. She started acting weird.

Every day Bella went to school like normal, but something still seemed wrong. All of Bella's friends had been saying she was acting strange and had lost a lot of weight, but everyone who tried to contact her was just as confused as everyone else.

Bella quit cheer, stopped eating, lost all her friends, and was failing most of her classes. She had even been seen with a demonic look on her face when she thought no one was watching.

Macy, one of Bella's childhood friends from school and cheer, wondered what was wrong with Bella. She decided to ask Bella's parents, to which they responded, "I don't know, but we are going to talk to the principal about it."

They went to the school demanding to speak to the principal, and he agreed. The principal, Mr. Edward, had a worried but sincere look on his face when he saw Bella's parents. He politely told them to sit down and warned them that they weren't ready to hear what he had to say.

Mr. Edward took a deep breath and a sip of water, then looked up and said, "Bella has been possessed."

Her parents looked shocked and screamed in confusion as Mr. Edward tried to calm them down.

"Listen," he said, "Bella saw something in the woods on the first day of school. The only problem is, that creature wasn't human, animal, or even an insect. It was an alien. This alien is so advanced that humans are incapable of understanding the level of capability they possess. They literally came to Earth and possessed five known people—Bella being one of them. The symptoms include dissociation from reality, hatred toward others, confusion, and demonic eyes when no one is watching."

Bella's mom and dad cried and begged for something to be done to fix Bella, but they simply couldn't do anything about it.

Five days after this incident, Bella's mom received a call from the school that Bella was absent—which was odd because Bella wasn't home either. She turned on the TV and saw that five people were missing, taken by the aliens.

THE ALIENS GOT HER!

Seasons Emotions

by Jenna Papke

Spring is the feeling of joy and the ability to renew.

The need to feel joy and the ability to start over

And not move too fast and then grow

And move forward with yourself

Summer is the feeling of happiness and satisfaction

The want to go out in the world and express yourself

Then able to have fun and continue on

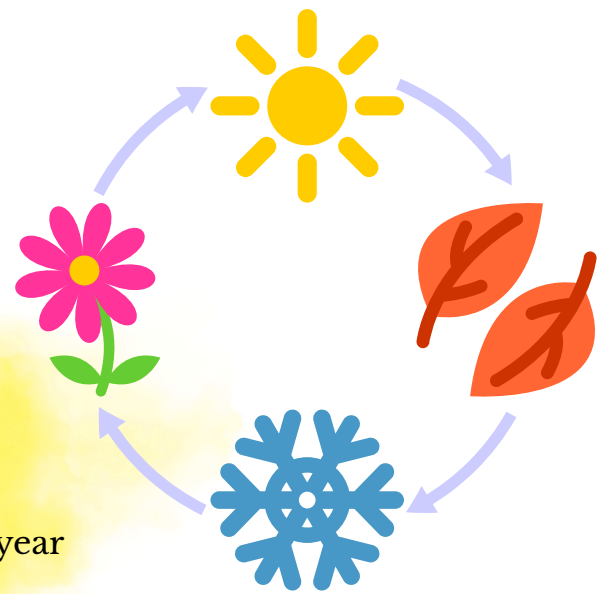
Fall is the feeling of nostalgia and memories

It helps you remember the time you had throughout the year

The embrace of coziness and comfort

Winter is the feeling of sadness and the want to start over

The want to be warm and have fun but are unable to
within the time that the days are shorter and gloomier.



Summer Fun Checklist

Go for a beach day



Have a picnic in the park



Watch a sunset



Swim in a lake or river



Fly a kite



Go fruit picking



Ride a bike by the coast



Take a road trip



Have an ice cream day



Go to an outdoor concert



Visit a water park



Go camping overnight



Make fresh lemonade



Visit a botanical garden



Try a new summer recipe



Explore a new city or town



Try beach volleyball



Read a book outside

