



THE SPARTAN SPEAKS

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NEWS

OHS students walk out a month after Florida shooting

Cari Spencer
Editor in Chief

On March 14, a month after the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting, more than 3,000 student-led walkouts were planned across America, according to the Associated Press. OHS students, led by the Students Against Gun Violence club, participated as well, to remember the victims and protest gun violence, the lack of strict gun control and the government's response to the nationwide debate. The walk-out lasted from 10 a.m. to 10:17 a.m., each minute honoring a life lost at the Florida shooting.

A mass of middle school and high school students, dressed in black, marched out of classrooms to meet at the flag. Junior Carolyn Fritz, who stood on a box at the front of the crowd, estimated that over 100 students attended. She said that the group stretched from the front doors of the high school to partially

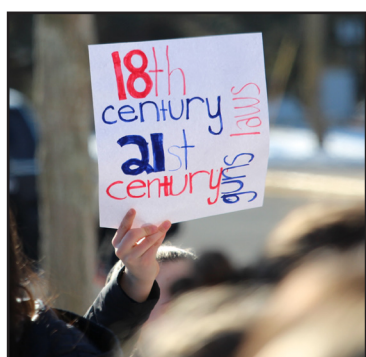
down the front sidewalk.

"To make sure nothing like that happens again," sixth grader Lila James said, explaining why she marched, "There should be no more gun violence."

Junior Gabriella Bann, a leader of the Students Against Gun Violence club, helped direct students. Fritz then started off the walk-out by reading a speech written by Isabel Bergerson, another leader of the Students Against Gun Violence club.

"Today, we need to remember the lives that were lost on February 14 at Stoneman Douglas High School ... I hope I am speaking for us all when I say this—we do not want their deaths to become yet another statistic chalked up as something that just 'happens,'" Fritz said, reading off of Bergerson's script, "We demand that our safety be protected under the laws that our government makes, so that we may have the freedom

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Photos/ Zach Adams

Students participating in the walk out displayed their signs.

SPORTS



Photo/ Minnesota Prep Sports

The team celebrates their win with the Orono student section.

Boys hockey gets the ultimate celly for the Spartans

Vivian Rohrer
Sports Editor

The battle for the puck was heating up; moving quicker than ever. The countdown began: "Three ... two ..." and before "one" could be chanted by the roaring student section, helmets, gloves, and sticks went soaring into the air. 20 boys' dreams became reality on Saturday March 10, as history for the Orono boys hockey team was made, winning their first-ever state championship at the Xcel Energy Center.

The 2017-18 team, ranked no. 1 in their district, ended the season with 23 wins, seven losses, and one tie. Senior Jack Suchy led the team with a total of 60 points; however, many of the players had an enormous impact on this team's success.

The dedication and brotherhood these players attained started over 10 years ago when they first stepped foot on the ice. 11 of these players' passion and efforts helped them win several Bantam A championships, which ultimately contributed to their final win against Alexandria, ending with a 2-1 win.

The Spartans led the game with the first goal

scored by Thomas Walker. That lead would not last as Alexandria player Jack Westlund soon tied it up. Not until the seventh minute of the third period did that score change, when junior forward Landon Wittenberg scored the game-winning goal, leaving the rest of the Spartans with an unforgettable memory that will be a story to tell in the Orono community for many years.

"It was such an unbelievably special season for me. Not only because we won a state title, but also because I did it with the boys I grew up playing hockey with. Playing alongside my brothers in front of the loyal student section at the X was a surreal experience and it was an amazing way for me to end my high school career," senior captain Thomas Walker said.

Walker, along with nine other hard-working seniors, was able to end his high school hockey careers as a champion. Many of these 10 boys would refer to this as their childhood dream.

"You know, when I was skating on my pond in my backyard as a kid, I think this is a little bit better than that. You dream about something like this

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FEATURES

Ben's energy lives on at third annual Benergy Bash

Emma VandenEinde
Copy Editor

Many community members and friends of the Harbison-Ruedisili family met at the Orono Ice Arena on Saturday Feb. 10 to honor their late son Ben in the third annual Benergy Bash, organized by family friend Jodi Lewis. Offering team scrimmages and skating, both kids and adults laced up their skates to celebrate his memory by doing what he loved most: hockey.

Ben Ruedisili, the little brother

of Orono junior Hanna Rose Harbison-Ruedisili, was a creative, confident and humorous young boy, according to parents Anne and Steve Harbison-Ruedisili. He lived and breathed hockey from a very young age, even sleeping with a miniature hockey stick at only 18 months old. On and off the ice, Ben lived a life full of loyalty to his friends and diligence to his passions.

The Benergy Bash started as an idea formed shortly after Ben passed away at the age of nine in April of 2015 due to an infection in his throat. According

to Lewis, it was evident at his memorial service that not only did Ben play hockey with many kids from schools such as Orono, Wayzata and Shakopee, but he loved to play with all of them.

"No matter if they were a Spartan or a Trojan, Ben loved them all the same," Lewis said.

From that realization, Lewis knew that these kids were meant to play on the rink together to celebrate the same love that Ben had for them. After some planning and ice reservation plans starting in July of 2015,

the Benergy Bash began to take shape into what it is today. Lewis, along with other mothers from the community such as Beth Anderson, Molly Setnick, and Gina Hansen still serve three years later as the core organizing team, according to the Benergy Bash website.

"[Lewis] called me and told me that she was going to reserve some ice time to celebrate Ben ... and I thought, 'This is why you need a community,'" Anne Harbison said.

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Photo/ Jodi Lewis

Father Steve Ruedisili and daughter Hanna Rose Harbison-Ruedisili honor their family member Ben with hockey at the Benergy Bash.

Dance team competes at state meet

Mandy Johnson
Features Editor

The Orono dance team competed at the annual state dance competition on Feb. 16-17 for their second year in a row. It was held at the Target Center in Minneapolis. Orono was one of the 12 schools in the Class AA section to qualify for state, according to the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) website. The jazz competition took place on the first day, and the high kick competition took place the next day on Feb. 17.

The Orono dance team participates in the Wright County Conference with Waconia, Delano, Litchfield, Holy Family Catholic/Southwest Christian, New Prague, New London-Spicer, Mound Westonka, Glencoe-Silver Lake, Hutchinson and Rockford, according to the Wright County Conference website.

ODT had a successful 2016-2017 winter performance season with their Beetlejuice theme kick dance and a lyrical jazz dance.

“We had to do something different for jazz because we lost eight dancers last year. We took a jazz approach instead of a lyrical approach like the year before,” varsity head coach Sharon Forde said, “It was upbeat and a lot of fun. All the dancers grew tremendously throughout the year.”

The 2017-2018 winter competition season was led by senior captains Regan Welch and Olivia Hedeem, and junior captain Maddix Grady. The team was coached by Sharon Forde and assisted by Meghan Jensen, Kaitlin Budish and Jenna Weber.

This was Forde’s third year as the ODT varsity head coach partnered with Jensen and Budish. This was Weber’s second with the team. They coached the team last year as they made the trek to the Target Center where they placed eighth in high kick and eleventh in jazz at the state dance competition. Forde won the Minnesota Association of Dance Teams (MADT) class AA Head Coach of the Year Award during the 2016-2017 season.

“The main difference between this competition season and past years would be that we are starting build a stronger program in both kick and jazz,” Forde said.

Dance team at the high school level consists of a B team and two different JV and varsity teams. Orono has all three teams. High kick and jazz each have a specific set of dancers on each team. At Orono, there are only 11 dancers on the varsity jazz team and those dancers also dance on the varsity high kick team. In total, there are 26 girls on the varsity high kick team, with only two seniors; Welch and Hedeem.

“When we are dancing there is nothing better than knowing the team is all

there to support and cheer each other on throughout the whole routine,” freshman varsity dancer Carson Bunkers said.

According to the ODT website, the team competed in three conference meets and five invitationals during the 2017-2018 competition season. At the end of the season, the team participated in the section 3AA tournament where three teams from each division were selected to compete in the state dance tournament.

“We started off the season thinking we wouldn’t make it too far since we lost a lot of seniors, but we scored very well and were very successful and even better than last year,” senior captain and varsity dancer Olivia Hedeem said.

ODT has a new dance theme every year. This year they chose a heavy theme of Alice in Wonderland for the high kick dance. They tell the whole story of Alice with actual characters, according to varsity head coach Sharon Forde. Each of the captains had a character to portray. Welch played Alice with a individual costume to look like Alice’s dress. Hedeem acted as the white rabbit and Grady was the Queen of Hearts. Their dance included Alice falling down the rabbit hole, meeting the rabbit and the tea party with the Queen. The dances end with everyone surrounding Alice, eventually making her way back up the rabbit hole.

“I like how unique our Alice dance is. It feels like we are truly telling a story, rather than just doing the same motions over and over again,” sophomore varsity dancer Grace Larsen said.

The team started their performance season on Dec. 2 with an invitational in Apple Valley; they placed fourth in jazz and third in kick. Throughout the season, the team performed during halftime at many Orono basketball games along with their regular conference meets and invitationals. As the ODT season progressed, their kick dance came in 1st at the Lakeville South competition. They had a very successful season in both kick and jazz with the section 3AA tournament on Feb. 3.

Their varsity jazz dance placed fourth

in sections and their varsity team placed third in the section high kick tournament which is a state qualifier. The team debuted their Alice in Wonderland theme kick dance at the state tournament, according to the ODT Facebook page.

“The season went very well, we graduated a lot of dancers last year so we didn’t know quite how it would go. The rookies stepped up to the challenge with the leadership of their captains and return veteran dancers,” Forde said.

The team placed ninth for their kick routine at the state competition. Awards are only handed out for first through sixth place. Sophomore Josie Peterson, junior Maddix Grady and seniors Regan Welch and Olivia Hedeem were chosen for the 2018 all-state dance team. The all-state dance team is a performance that will include top dancers from all around the state of Minnesota, with jazz and kick performances from dancers in classes A, AA and AAA. Peterson and Hedeem were selected for kick, while Welch and Hedeem were selected for jazz. The performance took place on March 10 at Eden Prairie High School.

“All of the girls were amazing to work with; they are so dedicated to this sport,” Forde said, “and we were so honored to be able to represent Orono again at the state tournament.”

The team concluded their dance season with an annual end of the year banquet on March 11. The coaches recognized the seniors, announced new captains and gave out awards for both dance and academic achievement. They are looking forward to a successful season next year.

Scan this QR code on Snapchat or another scanning app to see a dance team video made by Josie Peterson.



Photo/ Lifetouch Photography

The Orono Varsity 2017-2018 Kick Competition Team

UDELL from 7
Yoda, her trainer showed him in the Open Derby.

Here is a list of awards and achievements that Udell has had throughout her riding career:
2014 - Udell won the WSCA high point pleasure award and was the High View sorting champion.

2015 - Udell was the Outwest ranch horse show reserve champion, North Country Cutters 2 hand champion and the Carver County Fair Penning Champion. She placed in the High View Sorting Reserve and was the Ladies Sorting Jackpot Reserve Champion.

2016 - Udell was the Wright County Fair sorting Champion, the OutWest Ranch Horse Show Reserve Champion and

the high school rodeo reserve go-around champion. She placed in the top five at the state high school rodeo finals for reined cow horses.

2017 - Udell was the Northern Lights versatility all around youth champion & open working cow horse and cutting champion. For her second year in a row, Udell was the Wright County Fair sorting reserve champion and in the top five at the state high school rodeo finals for reined cow horses. She was the two-time champion for five-and-under Snaffle Bit with the NCRCHA. She was the ranchers NCRCHA champion. Udell placed third in the Nebraska Non Pro Derby 3rd and Reserve in Cutting.

2018 - On Feb. 9, Udell traveled to Fort Worth, Texas where she placed no. 16 overall and is now ranked eighth in the world in the non pro herd work.

HOCKEY from 1
forever,” Walker said in an interview with the *Pioneer Press*.

“The seniors set this goal years ago. They worked hard every day starting in June at STP and carried the hard work all the way through Saturday’s game. Such a fine group to coach. I will miss them,” first-year varsity coach Will Scholz humbly shared.

The unique skill and effort this team proved over the course of the week led to four boys, including seniors Thomas Walker and Jack Suchy along with juniors Jack Kubitz and Danny Eckerline, being selected for the all state tournament that will take place later this year.

This team came into the game with nothing but full hearts for the game of hockey. The Spartans knew this class A title belonged to them, as the video Spartan Existence, on youtube, was created

featuring the players to show the derive in each of their voices proving that this was their turn to be on top and in the end were able to sweep away the final win.

“Our number one priority was definitely to win the tournament, but next in line was to make the all hockey hair team. It is nice to have something else for the players to focus on,” said junior defenseman Zach Adams.

The “let-tuce” on their head is what the second competition of the tourney has come to. Not only were these boys able to enjoy the great feel-

ing of success, but many of them and their luscious locks were also featured in the well known all hockey hair team. This viral video produced by Game on! Minnesota, has become a secret goal for many players to be featured in during the tournament.

The hockey team will be saying their goodbyes to 10 loyal seniors, but the 2017-18 will never be forgotten. They will not just be remembered for winning the championship, but also for the bonding friendships they have built.

“They worked hard, were coachable, and had fun. I couldn’t have asked for a better group of young men to be around,” Scholz concluded.

“The seniors set this goal years ago. They worked hard every day starting in June at STP and carried the hard work all the way through Saturday’s game. Such a fine group to coach.”

—Will Scholz,
first-year varsity coach