

EAGLE MESSENGER

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF LIBERTY-BENTON LOCAL SCHOOLS | SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER

ENDING THE YEAR ON A HIGH NOTE



WE DID IT! We made it to the finish line of another school year. I can't tell you how much it means to me that we were able to end the year on a positive note – free of masks and enjoying traditional events.

Events like the Arts Festival, prom, spring concerts, Rocket Day, field days, and field trips, with some students traveling as far as Chicago, Illinois and New

York City. We also celebrated our class of 2022. They certainly had an unconventional high school experience, but there is no doubt their perseverance and resilience will lead to great success in their next chapter. We also celebrated the achievements of staff like Benjamin Gerken, who retired from coaching at the end of this year's boys basketball season after 21 years with the Eagles. Read about these activities and more throughout this newsletter.

We hosted the grand opening of our long-awaited Eagle Field House, our student-athletes will be able to use these brand-new amenities for years to come. This was another wonderful observance of the many new beginnings on the horizon at Liberty-Benton.

Despite all of the end of the year excitement, we recognize this was another challenging year for our staff, students and community. I hope everyone has a safe and relaxing summer, and we look forward to seeing you in August! And as always.....**GO EAGLES!**

With Gratitude,

Mark Kowalski, Superintendent

IMPORTANT DATES

AUGUST 1

ALL OHIO FALL SPORTS BEGIN

AUGUST 30

LB MEET THE TEACHER EVENT, 1-4 PM AND 5-8 PM

SEPTEMBER 6

**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
(2022-2023)**

**All dates are subject to change.
Please visit our website for updates.*



LONG-AWAITED FIELD HOUSE OPENS

After months of fundraising and construction, the Eagle Field House opened in grand fashion on April 2.

Complete with in-floor heating, a turf field, and wall padding and netting, this 28,000-square-foot facility will provide a better overall experience to Liberty-Benton's student-athletes and set the district apart from other northwest Ohio schools. Additionally, sports give a community something to rally around, and the Field House was designed to serve the community in new ways.

The grand opening came just in time for spring sports teams and gives fall athletes the summer to train with new and better equipment. The Field House directly benefits the baseball and softball, track and field, football, soccer, golf, and band and cheer programs, and indirectly benefits all other sports.

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD OF EDUCATION, BOOSTERS AND DONORS FOR MAKING THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE!



STUDENTS VISIT THE WINDY CITY

More than 50 Biology students visited Chicago at the end of April. Throughout their trip, they visited the Museum of Science and Industry, the Field Museum, and the Brookfield Zoo. They had a great time furthering their knowledge of the concepts they have learned throughout the year.



ELEMENTARY STUDENTS PRESENT PIRATE-THEMED MUSICAL

Ahoy! This is what Liberty-Benton Elementary's M.O.R.E. gifted program students had the audience shouting at its March 31 presentation of the musical Pirates 2: The Hidden Treasure. Congratulations to all of the students and staff for a successful show!



CONGRATS TO THE
CLASS OF
2022!



DID YOU KNOW FACTS

1

DID YOU KNOW

Liberty-Benton runs a Summer Library Program on Mondays and Thursdays

June 20–August 18
10 am – 12 pm
and 6 – 8 pm

Located in the Elementary / Middle School Library

2

DID YOU KNOW

The Class of 2022 has earned

\$836k

for their first year of college and \$2,888,884 for their 4-years of college in scholarships accepted.

3

DID YOU KNOW

The Class of 2022 is graduating

105

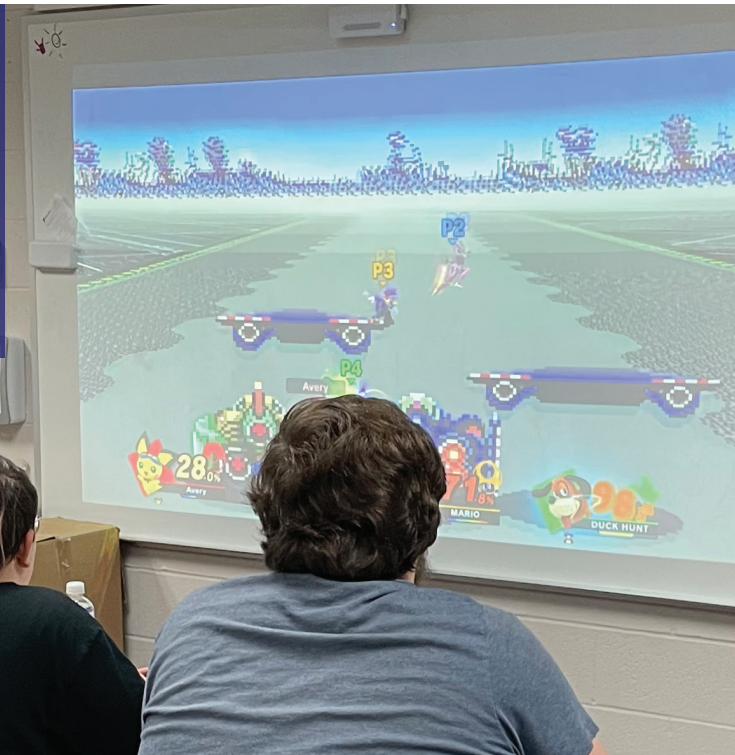
seniors from Liberty-Benton High School and 7 seniors from Eagle Academy.

ESPORTS TEAM SEES TREMENDOUS GROWTH THROUGHOUT 2022 SEASON

Liberty-Benton recently wrapped up its second season of Esports. Esports, or electronic sports, is a form of video game competition whose season runs from February through April.

This year's team, led by Captain Avery Martin, competed in Super Smash Bros. Ultimate for the Nintendo Switch. Despite finishing the season 2-5, the team had several new members this year and saw tremendous growth.

Congratulations to Gavyn Kunkle-Stough, Carter Gallagher, Andres Sanchez-Gonzalez, Jady Wilcox, Laura Romeiro and Andy Burman.



TREASURER'S UPDATE

FREE MEALS GOING AWAY IN 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR



In March 2020 when COVID-19 began spreading across the U.S., economic uncertainty was faced by millions of families. With the help of Congressional funding, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) began offering all students breakfast and lunch, at

no charge. These waivers are set to expire June 30, 2022, and Liberty-Benton students are expected to return next school year (2022-2023) to pre-pandemic operations.

To continue to receive the free and reduced cost meals, we encourage our families to apply for free/reduced meals for the 2022-2023 school year. Applications are available at liberty-benton.org by clicking on District, then District Forms or simply by visiting www.payschoolscentral.com. There is no cost for families to register and apply online. Hard copies will also be available at each school building when the school year begins.

Breakfast and lunch prices for the 2022/2023 school year are as follows:

- Elementary, Middle School, High School Breakfast: \$1.40
- Reduced Breakfast: \$.30
- Elementary K-5 Lunch: \$2.70
- Middle School 6-8 Lunch: \$2.75
- High School 9-12 Lunch: \$2.80
- Reduced Lunch: \$0.40

Respectfully,

Lisa Dobbins, Treasurer



LONGTIME COACH RETIRES

Liberty-Benton recently said farewell to Benjamin Gerken, who is retiring from coaching after 27 years, the majority of which were spent with the Eagles.

He was assistant coach to the boy's varsity basketball team for 15 years before moving into the head coaching position eight years ago. Under his leadership, the basketball program achieved 403 victories, 13 Blanchard Valley Conference championships, 18 sectional championships, and five district championships.

He said he's grateful for the support he's received from the community, assistant coaches, school administration, student body and players for all these years.

While you'll no longer find him pacing the court, he's continuing in his role as high school principal. You'll also find him in the stands cheering on his five children in their various athletic competitions.

Congratulations Mr. Gerken, and thank you for your dedication to the students and families of Liberty-Benton!



BASEBALL TEAM SEES HOW THE PROS DO IT

Batter up! Our students are traveling near and far this year, and trips aren't reserved for academics only. The Liberty-Benton baseball team recently toured the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory before taking in a game at Jim Patterson Stadium.

OUR AWARD- WINNING ARTISTS



Our student artists' creativity and skill were on display as part of the Hancock County Student Showcase Advanced Art Exhibition in April. The exhibit, held at the Marathon Center for the Performing Arts, was open to the public throughout most of the month.

Congratulations to Senior Marissa Green for her second-place finish for her "Afghanistan" oil painting. She also won the Rieck's Gallery Award for her "Morocco" painting. This award includes a scholarship and the honor of having her painting on permanent display at the Hancock County Educational Service Center.

Well done to Senior Jordan Snider as well, who received honorable mention for her ceramic mug entry.



ELEVEN GUITARS ADDED TO MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM

Thanks to a generous donation from Liberty-Benton's PTO, Ms. Ballou's eighth grade music class is learning an instrument not traditionally taught ... the electric-acoustic guitar. They didn't just purchase one guitar; rather, there are 11, so there is plenty of sound to go around!

The students are loving getting to know the instrument and learning how to play them, and Ms. Ballou is equally excited to be able to expand students' knowledge and passion for music and different instruments.



CHOIR STUDENTS ENJOY SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF NEW YORK CITY

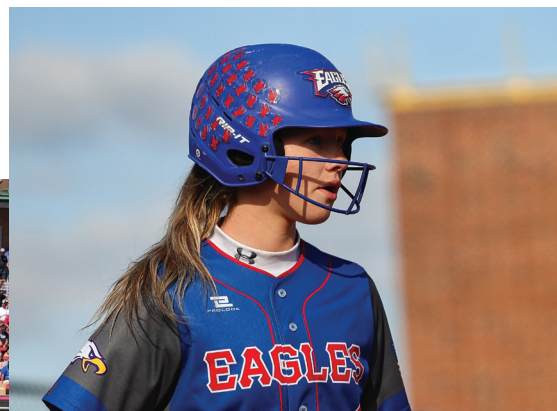
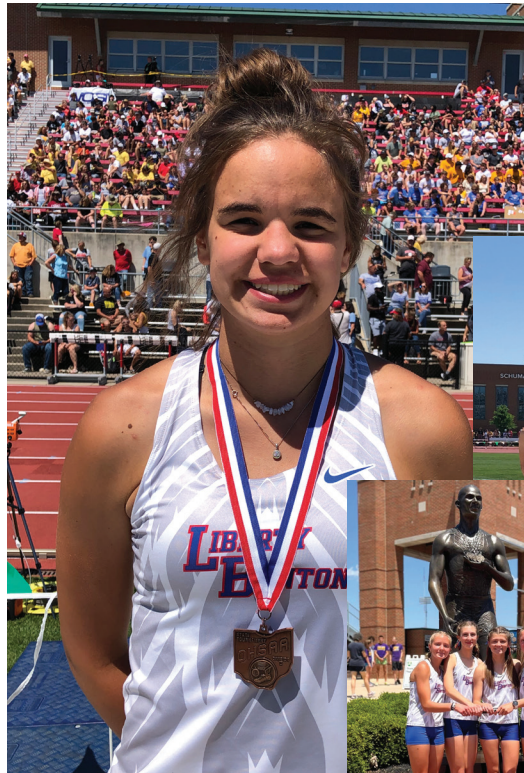
The Liberty-Benton choir is one of several groups of students who have had the opportunity to travel this year. In April, they traveled to New York City and we loved hearing about all of their adventures!

SPRING SPORTS WRAP-UP

Congratulations to our many student-athletes who achieved success this school year. This spring, several of our track stars made their way to the state meet on June 3, including Karis Willow whose high jump of 5'6" made her the regional champion and who earned 5th place at the state meet. The 4x800 relay team made up of Kylie Recker, Emma Garmatter, Rylie Irwin and Madi Gaerke, qualified for the state meet. Izzy Granger, the defending state champion in discus, earned state runner up this year and Stefan Kolan finished 12th in pole vault.

The girls softball team was a sectional champion while advancing to the district finals for the first time in school history. The baseball team and girls track teams were BVC champs as well.

Additionally, senior gymnast Olivia Rickle qualified for the national competition. She will continue her gymnastics career in the fall at Ball State University.



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