

# *The* *Pirate Speaks*

Y'ALL vs. US  
October 2010

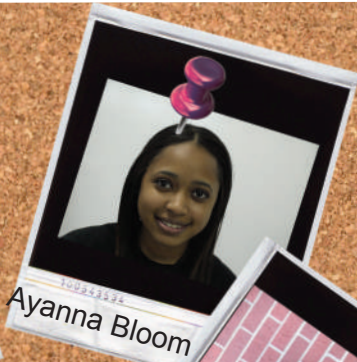


The Pearl High School Newspaper Since 1948





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Ayanna Bloom



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Amanda Rogers



Samantha King



Maria Cannon



Faith Harris



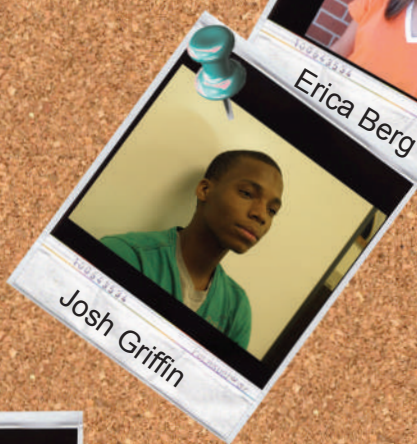
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The

Pirate

Speaks

## ***The Pirate Speaks***

500 Pirate Cove

Pearl, MS 39208

[www.pearl.k12.ms.us](http://www.pearl.k12.ms.us)

***The Pearl High School Newspaper Since 1948***

**Volume 62 Number 1**



# The Pirate Speaks

Y'ALL vs. US  
October 2010

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Cover and back photos by Ashley Parker, Amanda Rogers,  
Samantha King, Hannah Lewis, Juliet Ferrell

# ABC's of Success

By Erica Berg and Faith Harris

In July 2010, Dr. Matthew Dillon began his new job as principal at Pearl High School. Dr. Dillon received his bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and his master's and doctorate degrees from Ole Miss. His previous experiences include being the principal at South Panola High School and coaching baseball and teaching at Harrison County School District.

Dr. Dillon started off the school year by telling all the students of Pearl High the ABC's of PHS. **Attendance:** Attend school every day. **Behavior:** Have a positive attitude. Follow the dress code. Be on time. Be respectful. **Curriculum:** Strive to be the best academically. Prepare for subject test areas. Do your homework. Take advantage of available help.

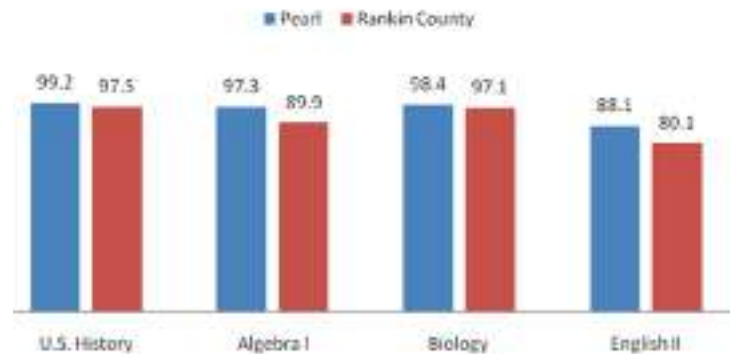
When asked why he thinks Pearl has such a high percentage of students passing the SAT, Dr. Dillon replied, "First of all, great faculty and staff give up their time and go above and beyond to set students up for success. The student body works extremely hard and does everything they need to do to be successful."

"We're not only going to ensure to have a high passing rate, but we will try to push as many students as

we can to proficient and advanced categories. Teachers will continue to plan and prepare students for success," Dr. Dillon said.

"We have had a great start of the school year. The potential is very high at PHS, and I encourage students to come to school every day with a positive attitude, ready to give their best effort, and meet the expectations of the teachers and administration. I've been very impressed with the school spirit from the student body and faculty alike, and there's not a better place to be than Pearl High School!"

Percent of students who passed SAT



The bar chart compares Pearl's SAT scores to the Rankin County School District.

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# NJROTC



**BUILDING A BETTER LIFE** As part of the unit's community service program, NJROTC cadets help construct a home in the Fondren area for Habitat for Humanity. On Saturday, 14 August, 19 cadets worked to finish the interior and install siding, doors and windows. Pictured are Danny Rodgers, Cody Wallace, Hunter Reddick, Hannah Seaney, Chelsea Copeland, Habitat for Humanity representative, Zekia Lewis, Michael Warren and Nic Hawker. Photo by Captain John Lewis.

**OVERCOMING OBSTACLES** Members of the NJROTC drill team participate in the Leadership Reaction Course at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, on Friday, 20 August. The purpose of the course is to test a Cadet's ability to provide the team leadership necessary to overcome an obstacle with a minimum of equipment and in a limited time period. Thirty-seven PHS Cadets took part in the course. Pictured are (left to right) Payton Pomtree, Cody McKay, Tyler Roper, and Billy McWhinnie. Photo by Master Chief Willie Lott.



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# Modern-Day Gladiator



By Joshua Griffin

Resource Officer Josh Craig started amateur boxing when he was twelve years old. Years later, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. Now, he is a Police Officer, a Mixed Martial Artist, a Kick Boxer (Muay

Thai), and a Boxer. On weekdays, he works from 7 a.m-4 p.m at the Police Department; he coaches and trains From 5 p.m-9 p.m. On Saturdays, he takes his students to tournaments at places in Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, Florida, Tennessee, and Texas.

When he is fighting he never considers losing. Craig said, “Things may not go as planned but you still should be confident in any fight.” In Mixed Martial Arts his record is 8 wins and 2 losses. In boxing, he has 10 wins and 1 loss, and in Muay Thai or Kickboxing he has 30 wins and 7 losses. “I train two times a day, in the mornings, I do cardio work and lift weights and at night I train in boxing, Muay Thai, Jujitsu, and wrestling a blend of them all. Also, I try to practice at least five days a week”

“The fight not only disciplines me, it also helps me to be a better police officer, and when I am in a confrontation with someone it gives me the confidence to do my job.” Resource Officer Craig says he loves fighting, “I think fighting is like the modern Gladiators. It shows the discipline in you and your opponent, and the best will always win.”

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# DEREK



# 2011





# Band Fans Since 1980



By Maria Cannon

Mrs. Elizabeth and Mr. Ed Varner have been fans of the Pearl "Pirate" Band for 35 years. They are two time former presidents and both times they were presidents the band won state championships.

Mr. Varner graduated from PHS in 1980 and Mrs. Varner from PHS in 1983. Before they met, Mr. Varner played trumpet in the Award Winning "Pirate" Band, and Mrs. Varner played flute for Brandon Academy. Mr. Varner recalls band camp as being brutal and tough all day long. Their fondest "Pirate" Band memory was in 2007 when both of their daughters were in band and won state together. Breanna Varner, who is currently in the band, and Brittany Varner, a "Pirate" Band alumna, both play flute. Their favorite band show of all time was "The Music of Chase" in 2007.

The Varner's did not meet through band; they met as lifeguards at a local pool. Mrs. Varner got pushed into the pool by her brother and she could not swim, so Mr. Varner jumped in and saved her. They have been together ever since. Mr. Varner previously owned Mr. Ed's Little Flock, and Mrs. Varner worked for Gerry's Florist and Gifts. They both are retired.

The Varners help the band because they enjoy being with the kids. The reward they receive from the band is simply when the kids are thankful. Football season for the band is the busiest time of the year. From August all the way through December, it never slows up. Mr. Varner said, "Once you are a member of the Pearl "Pirate" Band, you are always a member of the Pearl "Pirate" Band."

**Helping Hands** On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Varners help the band students after marching their show at the Northwest Rankin game. The Varners pass out water and work for anything the band students need. "You like to see your kids involved and there is nothing better than this," said Mr. Varner. Photo by Maria Cannon

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# Picture Perfect Memories

By Juliet Ferrell

People say, "A picture is worth a thousand words", but for some, photography is more than the flash of a camera and the beautiful pictures that result.

Photography class has become a safe haven for artists of all backgrounds and popularity groups. Two senior students in particular, Sara Ostrander who said, "I have my bedroom decorated in photos that I have taken over the years", and Katelon Adcock, have found Photography class as a place that is close to their hearts and close to home.

Both Adcock and Ostrander began the class knowing a bit of information about photography, but now that the seniors have begun to learn in this class, both have learned vital information that will help each to become a better photographer in the future.

Adcock said, "I've learned tons--micro, focus, movement, and lighting. I did take snapshots, but now I stop and think about the shot before I take it."

Ostrander and Adcock both want to become graphic designers. Adcock stated of her plans after high school, "I may go to MSU because they have the best graphic design program in the state, or I may go to Belhaven because it has a good program, and it's close to home." Ostrander would like to go to LSU after going to Hinds or Jones. No matter where Photography may take Ostrander, Adcock, or any of the Photography students, each will be able to tell their story through pictures.



Photos by Felicia Lee and Juliet Ferrell



# Gleeks Rule!

By Maya Miller

Don't Stop Believing! This and other classic inspirational songs were just a few of the upbeat and fun songs sung during the 2010-2011 school year's first musical revue *The Sounds of Glee*. Although this is not a play, it is a twist to traditional choir. Show choir is new to Pearl High School and drama teacher, Mrs. Harriet Matthews hopes to have a similar showing like this in the years to come.

*The Sounds of Glee* is not like the TV show, but it did include a small cast, such as Mr. Schuester, the glee club sponsor, played by Matt Brewer. Recent addition to the Drama department, Ms. Kerri Courtney wrote a script using songs from the show, using songs given to her by Eric Weeks, 2009 PHS graduate. *The Sounds of Glee* was an original show, and Weeks was given the music from a show choir camp he attended over the summer.

Pearl alumna, Marisol Rosas choreographed the dance numbers. There were four major numbers: "Jump", "Don't Stop Believing", "Somebody to Love", and "Proud Mary". Ladeshia Lonie and Kaitlyn Lee both had a solo. Emily Miller with Matt Brewer, Lora Beth Cook with Payton Cook, and Joycelyn Davis with Kay Hodges performed duets. There were also a couple of guitar solos from Ben Griffiee.

"The hardest part of the show," said Mrs. Matthews, "was the dancing. It was very hard choreographing it, and Marisol didn't go easy on us. Thankfully, the dance team, the band, and choir worked together to create a good show. We're lucky that way."





# Y'ALL

## Victory over Brandon

By Ashley Parker

Friday August 27, 2010, a night that will live forever in the hearts of all who were present at Ray Rogers Stadium. After a four-year losing streak, the Pearl Pirates beat the Brandon Bulldogs 27 to 24 in overtime. It was a long anticipated game where the Pirates would again reign victorious over their arch rivals from across town- a rivalry that has existed since 1949.

The game was not only special for the

obvious reasons such as winning the game, but it was featured on Fox Sport South in a series called *Y'all vs Us* which focuses on some of the longest and most competitive high school football rivalries in the state of Mississippi. The game was broadcasted live on Friday night to seven states across the southeastern United States and was rebroadcasted throughout the weekend. There were an estimated 3 ½ million viewers who watched the game that Friday... continue to page 11



Friday August 27, 2010 the Pearl High School student section cheers their team to victory against the Brandon Bulldogs. The game was the final event of the 2010 Spirit Week "Party on Deck." The senior class of 2011 won the school spirit week class competition followed by juniors in second, sophomores in third, and freshmen in fourth. Photos by Ashley Parker and Juliet Ferrell.





# vs. US

continued from page 10

In addition to the 48 minutes of fiery football on Friday night, Pearl and Brandon has a tradition of raising canned food for the charity Food for Families. Since the start of this tradition years ago, Pearl has maintained the history of showing their giving spirits and coming out ahead of the Bulldogs. This year was no different, in fact, the Pirates more than doubled

the can count of the Bulldogs with an impressive 118,000 cans to 44,000 cans.

Although the game was televised and the Y'all vs Us camera crew was on campus prior to the big event, the cameras were able to capture only some of the emotion felt by the players, coaches, and student body during the entire preparation time for football season. "I was so happy. I didn't ever feel like we would

beat them during my four years of high school and we did my senior year," said senior running back and defensive back A.K. Travis.

"When the game kicks off everyone will forget that it is on TV and then it will just be another Pearl/Brandon game," stated head football coach John Perry, who also played football for the Pirates during his high school career.



## *Voice of the Pirates* *"This year's game is the game I will most remember."*

By Ashley Parker

Ray Rogers is the Voice of the Pirates. Mr. Rogers has been a proud Pirate since 1948 when he began his sophomore year of high school.

In 1949, the first year Pearl had a football team, Rogers was quarterback and captain. Since the 40s, Rogers has had children with his wife Shirley, played minor league baseball, sold insurance, and served as a State Representative.

"This year's game is the game I will most remember. This year was a great game plus it had the excitement of it being televised," said Mr. Rogers. "It is amazing how the Pearl community supports the school and the athletic program. Our school is the lifeline of our community and has support for all in the district."





# From Pros to Pediatrics



PEARL vs. BRANDON: Devante struggles onto the field after injuring his ankle. Photo provided by Devante Nichols.

By Samantha King

Senior Pirate quarterback Devante Nichols refused to acknowledge the pain in his ankle and instead, focused on throwing the winning pass at the Pearl vs. Brandon game. After he hurt his ankle, Nichols said it took a lot of will power to get back on the field. “I had to push through the pain to lead my team to victory, that was the goal, and it was accomplished,” said Nichols.

Nichols moved to Pearl from Indianapolis, Indiana when he started first grade. He has been playing football his whole life because of his love for the game. Playing football runs in the family: Nichols’ father was running back, and his brother was a defensive lineman. Nichols has played many positions including quarterback, running back, wide receiver, and kicker receiver.

His future plans include football. “If I could play for a college team, it would be USM.” He also hopes to play for the NFL. “I want to play for the Indianapolis Colts,” sticking to his home team. After his football career he wants to be a pediatrician.

Nichols thinks his greatest strength is in his speed. He acknowledged that he pushes himself hard on the field to please his coaches and to achieve what he has worked for his whole life.

## Pressure is Motivation

By Hanna Lewis

Seven years as State Champion and eight years as runner up, Pearl High School’s Cross Country team has a record of excellence. This year, they plan to do it again but greater. Coach Woody Barnett said, “Our athletes are very dedicated to run.”

This year, the team has many veteran runners, many of these have won All-Stars and State Champions. This means that the runners have some pressure on them though.

With the school’s record, there is pressure, from friends, from the other schools, but surprisingly pressure does not come from the one place it is expected. Coach Barnett tries not to put pressure on his runners but to encourage them instead. The most pressure, though, comes from the runners themselves as they push to redo last year’s excellence, according to the Coach this pressure turns into motivation.

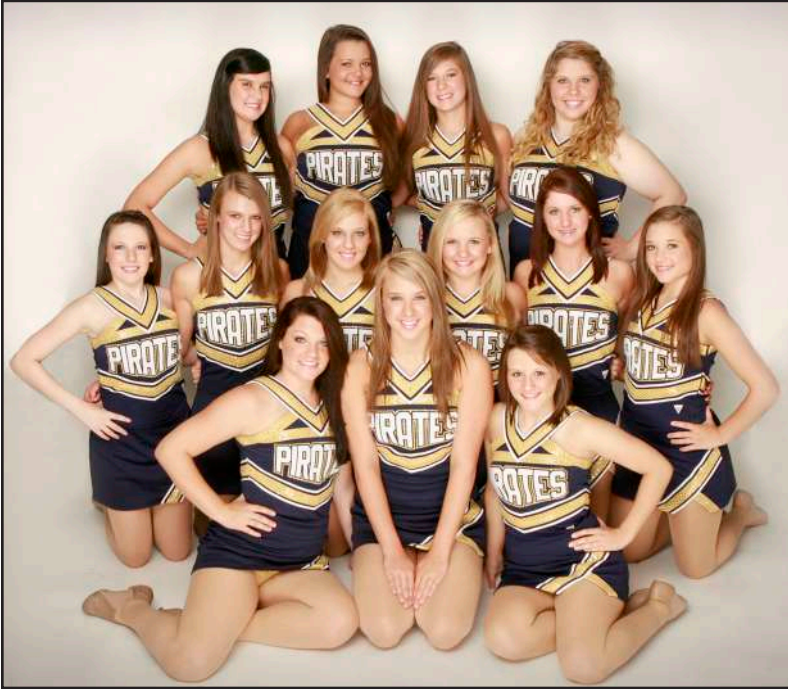
“This pressure is just part of it. The kid’s have to deal with it, and the coach has to deal with it,” claims Coach Barnett. With that, the coach also said that if he could tell his runners who read this one he would say, “Thank you for your dedication, hard work, and effort.”



PEP TALK TIME: “I try not to pressure but to encourage the runners,” said Coach Barnett. Here he talks to the cross country teams after they had won the meet at Ridgeland High school on September 2, 2010. Photo by Hanna Lewis.



# The Pirates' Crew



By Maya Miller

The "Pirates' Crew" Dance Team won the 5A Jazz State Championship and was runner-up for the High Kick State Championship this past year.

The dancers attended a Universal Dance Association camp at Panama City Beach over the summer, placing 2nd. They were also named a superior team and were awarded the Spirit Stick.

Six members were selected as UDA All Americans, and 3 seniors were nominated to audition for positions on the UDA staff.

Coach Tiffany Durr was recognized as the Most Valuable Coach for her third consecutive year. Photo provided by Tiffany Durr.

## A Good One

By Amanda Rogers

Head Softball Coach Leigh Ann Purnell claims that this season is going to be a good one. They plan to go well into the playoffs and possibly championships.

The Lady Pirates softball teams--slow pitch and fast pitch--have been together all summer training and disciplining themselves to learn more and work harder. After being asked how well her team works together Coach Purnell stated "Pretty well, but hope to get even better with time".

Coach Purnell has been coaching for twenty-two years, first starting at Lanier High School.

"I love the game of softball and I love to teach and be with kids. I want to make a difference," Purnell claimed.

In Purnell's opinion, the team's biggest strength is a good bit of experience and a lot of hard work.



Coach Purnell grades papers before leaving for practice.  
Photo by Amanda Rogers.

***"I love the game of softball  
and I love to teach and be with kids.  
I want to make a difference."***



# Running for Recovery



**Takes Practice** Kaleigh Hunt practices running in the summer heat. Hunt has been in cross country/track since her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. "I'm just hoping to make it through the year," said Hunt. Photo by Maria Cannon

By Maria Cannon

Senior Kaleigh Hunt has been involved in cross country, track, and soccer since 7th grade. Hunt unfortunately tore her ACL her junior year playing soccer and had surgery on February 11. Recovery time for this surgery usually takes eight months, so she has still not recovered.

Hunt favors soccer and cross country. Hunt said, "I moved to Pearl mainly to play soccer with all the girls here." She won state twice with her cross country team her 7th and 8th grade year.

Outside of sports, Hunt likes going out to eat or hanging out with her friends. Before she came to Pirate Country her 7th grade year, Hunt went to Byram Middle School.

Hunt's friends and her family are her inspiration for sports. She started running because her friend, Lexie Hunt insisted she try out. Hunt is an only child and her mom is a single parent. "My family is big in sports. It's something I get from them," said Hunt.

  
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# One Big Family

By Amanda Rogers

Among many new additions to our student body, two brothers stand out. Mitchell Wills, from Sydney, Australia, and Ben Griffee, from Wasilla, Alaska, became stepbrothers after Will's mom married Griffee's dad, and have been together ever since.

They moved to Pearl in late June of this year, due to their dad's job change. After being asked if they felt welcomed and have made friends, they both replied at the same time, "Oh Yea!"

Wills is a member of the football team and Griffee is a cast member of the musical production Glee. The brothers have been very active in sports, including rugby and baseball. "The football team is awesome. We're like one big family", said Wills. Griffee claimed "The drama and choir classes are my favorite".

Both have become very popular since the move. "Random people in the halls would come up and say 'Hey you're that guy from Alaska'", said Griffee. They both said "Everyone at Pearl is very welcoming".

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# From Iguanas to Squirrels

By Hanna Lewis

Junior Genesis Powell is a new Pirate, who moved here from San Juan, Puerto Rico, an island territory of the United States.

Powell and her mom came here to be with family and she really enjoys Pearl. Since most schools in Puerto Rico do not put emphasis on sports, she liked Spirit Week and the Pearl vs. Brandon Game. Powell said, "Pearl has really awesome school spirit and I like that it's competitive."

In addition to attending school events, Powell is a lifeguard. For two years, she has had certifications in Lifeguarding, CPR, AED, and First Aid and has worked at Hidden Lake Camp during the summer and school holidays. Genesis began lifeguarding when one of her friends introduced her to it. Powell said, "It's fun and I like the pay."

Powell did get a surprise when she first moved here; the surprise was a squirrel. In Puerto Rico, they do not have squirrels--only iguanas. So when she got here and saw one, she was very surprised. She said "I wanted to run up and pet it, but then my mom told me they would bite me if I tried."



**NEW PIRATE** Genesis Powell is one of our new Pirates. She transferred from Murrah after attending there for two years, Before that she lived in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Photo by Hanna Lewis.



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# Not Just a Jock

By Ayanna Bloom

Full back #49 Ben Hodges is not your ordinary jock. Besides being a football player, Ben also likes to act.

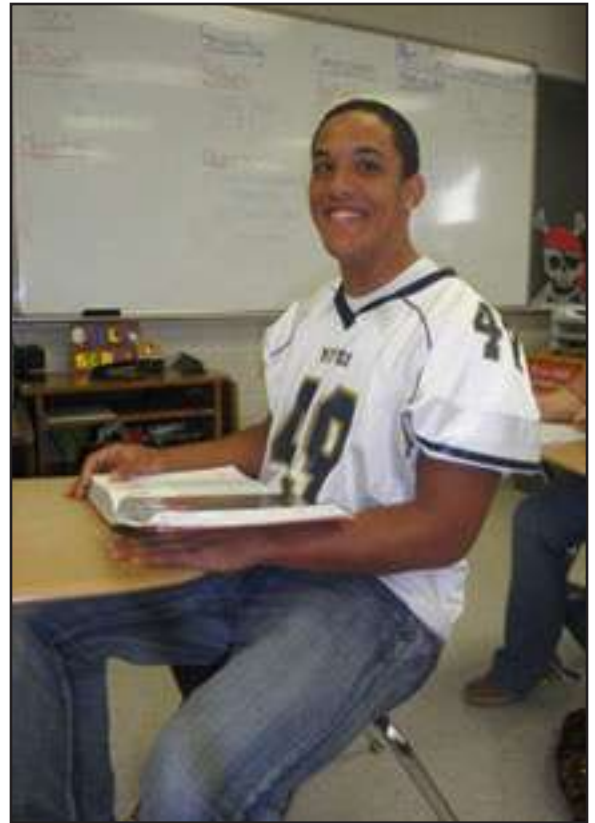
He decided he had a passion for acting at the age of ten when he wrote a play with his cousins.

Hodges's first time stepping out on stage, as the lead role Puck, a fairy in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," he felt a lot of mixed emotions. "At first I was scared out of my pants, but when I heard the audience laughing I relaxed," said Hodges.

Though he's been playing football for six years, he says it is harder to learn lines for a play than it is to learn football plays. In Ben's opinion football and acting come pretty close, but his love for football is stronger.

Hodges's favorite football player is Emmitt Smith, who he says was one of the best offensive backs in football history, and he would like to be just like him. His favorite actor is Adam Sandler, who he thinks is hilarious.

"I just like goofing around," Hodges said. "Being in plays is the only time you can act stupid in front of a bunch of people."



Junior Ben Hodges studies English Literature during Bravo. Hodges said it is important to keep his grades up so he can stay on the football team. Photo by Ayanna Bloom.

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 H E E N R W K L . D A B C W P I P  
 D B F Y T Y F L R W E E I V N H Q  
 A Z E O I O M A D L L E V E W H F  
 R A L O M P D B K V R T H W N M I  
 O C M R E L U T T Y E H H A Z Y D  
 G K J F A D E O S C E O V J A Y D  
 E G U V B N K O L C H V W C W O X  
 I L E Y W A P F I F C E M R I O E  
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vs.  
**US**

EAT DIRT  
DOGS



**PIRATES**

0:00

**VISITOR**

27

1

TOL

THRELLIN  
Pitt-Southern

TOL

24

3

DOWN

4

TO GO ON

4

QTR

5

