

The Crown Prints

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Aquinas students have the beat!

By Evan Hoelscher

Make way for the King and Queen! This year's royalty, Seniors Emma Prochaska and Josiah Brezina ruled the beat at the final event of the Homecoming Week festivities, ensuring all Aquinas students showed the theme "We've Got the Beat."



Homecoming Week kicked off this year on Monday, with students celebrating with the theme of "Country vs Country Club." Senior Cecilia Sisco said, "Country Club [was my favorite day,] I had leather pants, and that was pretty cool." The student body participated in several class games, including a tug of war and curling with sixth graders. The Country Club won the tug of war, and sophomores won the curling.

The dress up theme for Tuesday was "Thrift Store," which was biology teacher Mr. John Wehr's favorite dress up day. "[Thrift Store day] allowed students to be more creative with their costumes." Thrift Store day had people dress up in second-hand or mismatched clothing. All school Mass took the place of class games on Tuesday.

Wednesday was "Barbie and Ken Day." Aquinas students filled the halls wearing pink and blue, and students competed in the most popular game of Homecoming Week, the food eating competition/relay

race combo. The Junior Class won the annual competition. Freshman Rose Wesling said, "Relay [was my favorite], especially when Kayla (Karpisek) downed that piece of spam."

The school rocked Thursday with the theme of "Rock and Roll." Students dressed up as their favorite rockstars. Students and faculty competed in events such as the limbo, hula hoops, push-ups, and wall sits during the class games. Senior Tyler Kastl said, "Rock Day (was my favorite day,) I feel like out of all the days people put the most effort into [Rock Day]."

On Friday the Aquinas Elementary School came to Aquinas to celebrate a pep rally with the middle and high schoolers. The elementary students participated in games and decided the winner of the class poster competition. The sophomore's poster, designed by Kaitlyn Schneider and Becca Podolak, won the competition.

Continued on page 7

Aquinas students and staff are truly present

By Kaleb Andel

What does it mean to be "truly present"? This theme will guide the students, faculty and staff at Aquinas Catholic Schools during the 2023-2024 school year.

Being truly present means different things for each person. Senior Wesley Miller said, "Being truly present means to me is being in the moment with my classmates, friends, with Jesus, or my family in general." Most believe being truly present is a good thing; people can be truly present each in their own way.

This theme will impact Aquinas student's spiritual life, for the better. Campus minister Mrs. Beth Nemec said, "I really feel like it's the best theme we could have chosen. How [the theme] affects [students] depends on their openness to the eucharist."

People have been truly present in the

school early in the school year. "Just being in the moment with the class, just being able to make those memories, and remember what the teacher is teaching me, so that way I can present it to other people." Miller said

Students and staff have taken steps to follow this theme. "[Everyone] should just really pause. The goal is an hour, but even if it's a half hour, but just to really pause and be with Jesus." Nemec said.

Indications are that students and staff like the theme. "I personally think it's a good theme, especially for this school year," Miller said.

Fr. Tony Schukei consecrates the wine into the blood of Christ at a Mass held in the Aquinas chapel. Students attend Mass twice weekly. Photo by B. Fontenot



Gallaway heads new mechatronics class

Central Community College opens new circuit gateway for students.

By Evan Hoelscher

It is a new year with big changes for Aquinas, and Mr. Roger Gallaway and his mechatronics class are here to get Aquinas caught up with new technology.

In recent years Aquinas has made major advancements in technology, and Gallaway will aid in the next step of the process with his mechatronics class. “[The mechatronics class] gives a great explanation and understanding of how electricity itself works.” Gallaway also believes the class has uses in day-to-day life by helping students to understand basic wiring for home repairs.

Gallaway has some of his personal experiences, to bring to the class and said the

field always interested him. However, he could not find a reason to spend the time learning the field until he was approached by Aquinas to teach the class. Gallaway recommends anyone interested in the class come and talk to him, and sitting in on a class may be an option.

Gallaway also commended Central Community College’s aid in the project. “Central Community College approached Mr. Zisset and Fr. Ventre about bringing [mechatronics] in as a program to the school.” According to Gallaway, the mechatronics program would not be in this school without the college’s help.

Sophomore Violet Schmid is a student in the mechatronics class and feels the class could help her understand a future job better. She also believes in the importance for anyone going into a similar field to her. “[Mechatronics] is teaching me a lot about electricity and any machinery I could work with.”

Schmid said she felt these skills can be applied in everyday work. Schmid appreciates how the class helps her understand any machinery she may interact with in the future, and how she is learning valuable skills for a potential future career.

Miriovsky leads the way to better help

By Colby Miller

The guidance counselor Mrs. Sara Miriovsky wants to make some changes at Aquinas. Miriovsky plans to bring new programs to help the students as much as possible.

Miriovsky provides a bright and cheerful attitude to any student in need. Miriovsky also wants to provide the outlook that everyone has a bad day once in a while and may need some help to get through it. “I think I’m kind that helps me with my job,

and I think I can help other people be kind too.”

Miriovsky was inspired by another guidance counselor while student teaching and decided to go into that career path. “When I was student teaching at Lincoln there was a really good school counselor there. When I had to decide to continue my education, I decided to try school counselor.” Miriovsky then went to school to get the undergraduate college degrees necessary to be a guidance counselor in psychology and other courses at University of Nebraska-Lincoln and master’s guidance degree at Doane.

Miriovsky plans on implementing new programs that are in use by other schools to help students in the Aquinas system. “At the elementary school I want to do in classroom guidance lessons.” The program Miriovsky hopes to implement is the standard guidance counselor program and a program of spreading kindness at the middle and high school.

The job Miriovsky has provides certain challenges to better help the students. “Sometimes in order to help someone with the issues they have, it takes time. [the problem is] not going to be solved right away.” Miriovsky likes the ability to help others and to provide a secure place to help them.

CrownPrints

The Crown Prints is published four times a year to inform, educate, and entertain the Aquinas community.

We urge letters to the editor. Letters should be given to Ms. Jean A. Brown in Room 16. Letters must be signed; however, anonymity, if requested, will be granted if deemed necessary.

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The Crown Prints is a publication produced by the journalism department at Aquinas High School, David City, Nebraska 68632.

Schedule for

Mrs. Miriovsky

Monday:

1:45-3:30

Tuesday-Friday:

12:30-3:30

Runners finish at Kearney

By: Rebecca Wacker

Runners to your mark, set, go! The Aquinas cross country runners had a successful season, qualifying the girls' team for state.

Additionally senior runner Timothy Duke felt the season went well for the boys' team. "[The season] could have gone better without dealing with injuries, [but] the new guys have done well," Duke said.

The boys' team improved a great deal according to Duke. Duke believes junior Finley Zook improved notably from last year. "The new guys [seniors Ryan Hein and Robert Pytlik and freshman Jacob Wacker] have [also] been improving consistently."

Duke felt the overall individual who improved the most this season was Pytlik, improving his time around four minutes faster since the start of the season. Pytlik's ran twenty-two minutes and seventeen seconds at the district meet.

"The girls' team has been doing amazing this year and having a blast," senior Gianna Frasher said. Frasher also feels that the team dynamic is awesome.

The girls have all worked hard and improved individually both with time and effort according to Frasher. The hard

work has helped the team improve overall.

Frasher feels mental strength is an important quality in a cross country runner. "My mentality this year is stronger which has greatly improved my performance."

Coach John Svec felt that the teams did well this year. "Everyone is running well and hard, improving, and growing."

Svec said some surprise runners this year include Pytlik, and juniors Sydney Hartman and Katie Burwell. These three came out this year for the first time, and Svec said he was glad to have them and hopes they had a great experience.

One of the hardest courses this year was at Seward, as class A and B runners dominated the course, but the Centennial Conference meet and Aquinas invite were also loaded, according to Svec.

According to Svec, the middle school cross country runners also worked hard, learning about cross country and what it takes to be a high school runner. Svec believes real potential exists with the middle schoolers, but the challenge will be to get the middle school runners to come out in high school and make the commitment.



Senior Gianna Frasher runs in Aquinas' home meet. At the state meet this year the girls team placed tenth as a team, with Frasher placing second individually. Photo by E. Hoelscher

Young Monarchs have small but might roar

Junior varsity plays will use experience for the future.



Freshman Tristan Davis runs for a first down at home. Thirteen freshmen played for the Monarchs. Photo by M. Krivanek

By Seth Hlavac

The junior varsity football team has been having a tough season. The starting lineup consists of sophomores and freshman. The team is so far 0-6 on the year with one game left.

The team played seven games this season. The team lost some close ones to Battle Creek 13-6, Fremont Bergon 0-3, Lincoln Christian 12-26 and Scotus 8-20.

Games against Yutan and Wahoo were different because of the size difference and experience of the teams. Yutan was the first game of the season, so the team wasn't fully prepared. Coach Eric DeWispelare said, "Wahoo was always a tough game because they have more numbers and are usually bigger in size." They won their last game of

the season against Tri County 26-14 for their first win. The team finished the season 1-6.

"Sophomores have really improved since last year," DeWispelare said. According to the team roster sophomore Luke Storm is a starter on junior varsity, but he also has been playing in many varsity game this year. Freshman on the starting lineup on offense included Landon Pohl, Troy Masilko, William Podolak, Gunner Marushak, and Kade Semin.

The defense included Landon Pohl, William Podolak, Tristan Davis, and Kalen Stouffer. Davis holds a starting position on the team. "Being a Starter is good, I like having the experience playing with the sophomores," Davis said.

Stutzman strikes out old record

By Rebecca Wacker

Strike three; batter out! Junior Brooklyn Stutzman broke Aquinas' Career Strikeout Record with 368 strikeouts in a game against the Wymore Southern Raiders.

Stutzman has been pitching for about seven years. "I was probably like nine or ten when I started pitching, and I'm about to turn seventeen now."

During the summer Stutzman works with pitching coach Ms. Kacie McCarthy a few times a week. "A big thing I worked with [McCarthy] on was placements." Stutzman believes placement is important, if a pitcher cannot throw a strike, speed is irrelevant.

Stutzman first became aware how close she was getting to the career strikeout record in the 2022 season after breaking the single season strikeout record. "Once I got that, I set the goal to get the career record."

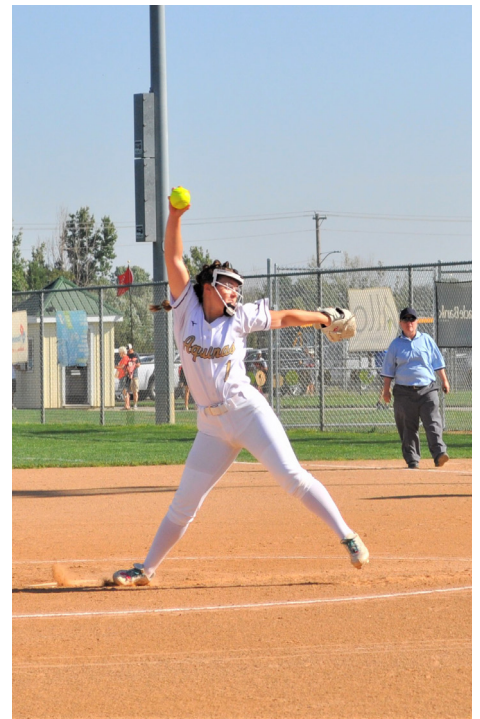
Stutzman worked hard to get the record. Stutzman's attitude as she approached the

record was, "Ok, keep working your butt off; you've got to get there." Stutzman also emphasized the need to put the team first.

Stutzman feels completing the record-breaking strikeout felt good for a couple reasons. "Of course, it's like, breaking the school record. But even just making a small little goal for yourself and then getting that [feels good]."

Since breaking the record, Stutzman has set her next goal to reach 800 career strikeouts. At the time of this interview, Stutzman shared she was around thirty strikeouts away from 500.

Junior Brooklyn Stutzman prepares to release a pitch. Stutzman has worked hard to improve her pitching throughout the 2023 season. Stutzman said "We had a successful season. We fought for each other when we needed to, and we never gave up on each other. We always battled back when we were down" Photo by B. Fontenot



Monarch volleyballers hustle, hit, and never quit



Freshman Taylor Smith and junior Keltie Hein jump to block the volleyball against the Guardian Angel Central Catholic Bluejays. The Monarchs finished their season 4-28, going 1-1 at sub-districts. The Monarchs won their first game and lost their game in sub-district action. Photo by M. Krivanek

By Seth Hlavac

Aquinas volleyball has had some challenging games this season, finishing their season with a record of 4-28.

Senior outside hitter Rebecca Andel believes the team improved this season. "Our teamwork has improved a lot this year, as well as the little things. We needed to finish games and not get into our heads." Andel finished the year with 10 blocks.

Freshman outside and middle hitter Skyler Vandenberg who played on varsity and was also in the starting line-up for the Monarchs. "Being a starter is very good, and it is a big accomplishment. My mindset has improved by not getting into my head, and if I make a mistake, to move on." Vandenberg finished the season with 129 kills.

The Monarchs ended the season in the second game of sub-districts. Playing at Clarkson-Leigh. The girls won their first matchup against the Twin River Titans in three sets. They lost their second game to the number one seed against Clarkson-Leigh.

Hain almost stopped by storm

By Nathaniel Hain

Band, horns, are UP! The Masonic marching band played their show indoors on the University of Nebraska-Kearney campus due to lightning in summer, 2023.

The outdoor half time show for Masonic got canceled due to a thunderstorm. Senior trumpeter Tate Hain said, "The storm delayed the football game a lot," Visitors came to watch the band play inside.

The Masonic band also played during the Shrine Bowl whenever either team scored. The band also played the National Anthem before the game. Hain said the band's purpose was to "pep the people up by playing music in the stands."

The band had aides called Junior Band Assistants (JBA's). The JBA's helped the band members find spots and stay in line. Hain said the JBA's helped the band members to look uniform in their presentation.

Hain stated that Masonic was "a lot more controlled, definitely more fun," than his experience with the Aquinas marching band. Members took Masonic band more

seriously than students take band at Aquinas. Hain believes attendees enjoyed their time with the band.

The band's favorite song was "Hey Baby." The piece is a catchy, expressive tune to enjoy. "We had more fun with it but were still serious." This piece was a pep band song, played during the game.

The band members paid nothing to participate with the Masonic band event. "There were sponsors who paid for Masonic Band," according to Hain. The only expense was gas travelling to Kearney.

Masonic band members marched in parade and in field formations. Hain explained their marching style was "Heel to toe, high pointing toes." This marching style compared to Aquinas's style. Hain has been in Aquinas' marching band for 4 years.

Practices for the performance lasted for 4 days. "We had a few breaks, but not many." The band received breaks every two hours. The members stayed in dorm rooms across from the field.



Senior Tate Hain and sophomore Nathaniel Hain wait before the football game starts. They were the only two Aquinas students to attend Masonic marching even. Photo courtesy of V. Hain

Cheer squad "brings it on" at Aquinas

Bella Fontenot

Go Big Black!! The new 2023 cheerleaders are not the first Aquinas has had. Early 90's was the last time cheerleaders were at Aquinas. The previous cheerleaders were led by Ms. Brown for about five years.

The new squad has brought some school spirit back. Brown said, "I think having a cheerleading squad will bring spirit back into this school, something that we have been lacking for a lot of years." Brown also added, "I think having the cheerleaders makes our school look like we're really involved."

Eight girls, plus their coach Mrs. Michaela Moravec, make up the cheer squad. Junior Keltie Hein said, "A cheerleader is a happy person. They bring spirit to the school, and they don't talk bad about our sports even if we're down." Hein is a member of the 2023-24 squad.

According to Moravec, cheer teaches much more than just getting a crowd pumped. Cheer also teaches girls how to be a leader and build confidence in front of crowds, as well as how to be responsible. "I

think we're going to walk out of here with a whole bunch of confident young ladies."

Cheerleaders are important to a school system, Moravec said, "A cheerleader is an all-essence school spirit for their whole school." Hein added, "I know my freshman and sophomore year did not have cheerleaders, and the football games were fun, but with the cheerleaders, it just gets the crowd more involved."

"With Mrs. Moravec running [cheerleading] it will be very good. She has experience with cheer, and she knows what makes a good cheer squad. She knows what looks good," Brown said. Moravec added what motivates her to coach cheer is "to be a positive role model to a bunch of girls that need it."

A cheerleader's main goal is to "cheer" up the crowd. Hein said, "My favorite part of cheerleading is being part of the team, with the girls, doing our hair, and bringing people together to cheer."

Having cheerleaders has greatly impacted the crowd and student section. "Students

are more organized at the games. I think that having cheerleaders can only bring positive appearances to our school," Brown said.



Junior cheerleader Alexa Matulka dances with the elementary girls during halftime. The cheer squad hosted an afternoon camp to teach a routine to perform at the game. Photo by C. Sisco

Monarchs take swing at history

By Gus Yindrick

The Aquinas softball team played well this season and earned a record of eighteen wins and six losses going into post-season play. Additionally, this season was the first year in Aquinas softball history that a team has made the state tournament.

The girls won both of their sub-district games, sending them to the district finals where they played West Point's Guardian Angels Central Catholic. The Monarchs won the first game in an extra inning thriller, setting the team up to be only one game away from a ticket to state. The girls kept the momentum going and ended up winning the second game in a dominate fashion.

The Monarchs had a rough start to the first district final game. The Monarchs were down by multiple runs early in the game. They battled back and scored big late in the game to send the game to extra innings.

The Monarchs battled back and found a way to come out on top with a score of 9-8 and finding themselves one step closer to the state tournament. Sophomore second baseman Madison Vandenberg said, "I was really happy, and the win gave us a confidence boost going into the second game."

In the second game of the district finals, the Monarchs got out to an early lead going up six to zero going into the bottom of the first inning. GACC rallied back and had a twelve to ten lead going into the top of the fifth inning. From there on it was all Monarchs, winning the game with a score of 23-12.

Winning this game sent the Monarchs to the state tournament where they played Ashland-Greenwood and Gothenburg Sophomore out-fielder Ainsley Wollmer described going to state, "It was really cool to know that this team was the first to go to state ever."

Winning this game sent the Monarchs to the state tournament where they played Ashland-Greenwood and Gothenburg,

Sophomore Out-fielder, Ainsley Wollmer described going to state, "It was really cool to know that this team was the first to go to state ever."

The girls lost their first game to Ashland-Greenwood 9-0. For the Monarchs elimination game, they played Gothenburg, and lost in a close game 7-6. The Monarchs finished their historic year with a record of twenty-two and eight.



Senior Bianca Romshek slides into third base in an away game against Grand Island Central Catholic. Romshek was one of two seniors on the 2023 team, along with classmate Jordyn Bohuslavsky.

Photo by B. Fontenot

Save students and their supplies...say yes for backpacks!



Sophomore Dillon Bohuslavsky eats a watermelon in the Homecoming Week relay race. Sophomores went on to place second in the race. Sophomore Marissa Miriovsky said, "The eating contest was fun to watch." *Photo by K. Andel*



Homecoming

Continued from page 1

Schneider said, "[The homecoming theme] was music themed and Spotify has music." The sophomore poster featured symbols for each dress up day in the form of a song cover from Spotify.

Ultimately, winning the poster competition was not enough to carry the sophomores to victory in the class games. The Senior Class claimed their title as the winners of the Aquinas 2023 class games, winning bragging rights for the year. Additionally, seniors Bianca Romshek and Luke Reiter won the annual cutest baby contest.

Brezina and Prochaska became royalty at the 2023 homecoming dance on Saturday and ruled over the dance floor. Brezina said, "I was surprised but very excited that I was chosen as homecoming king by my fellow students." Other members of the court included Tyler Kastl, Ryan Hein, Wesley Miller, Luke Reiter, Cecilia Sisco, Jordyn Bohuslavsky, Bianca Romshek, and Gianna Frasher.

Football finds challenges during season

By Marcus Krivanek

The Aquinas football team starts rolling! After a slow start, the Monarchs expect to finish in the semi-finals or better in the playoffs.

The Monarchs started off with two early losses. They made minor changes to the offense and have won five straight games.

The Monarchs end the regular season with two tough games against Yutan and Bishop Neumann. Lydon DeWisplare and Jakob Kavan are both hoping to finish the regular season with seven wins and two losses. Jakob Kavan says, "The team needs to work on option defense and

build a stronger passing attack to win."

Lydon DeWisplare says, "Most of the juniors had to start last year as sophomores. So, we brought back a lot of experience." "Marcus Krivanek and Jacob Moravec have stepped up a lot this year, they have become more physical players," says DeWisplare.

"The teams' biggest weakness is the lack of depth," says Luke Reiter. The Monarchs were missing Calib Svoboda for five games and Jacksen Jelinek suffered a season ending injury. Svobodas return will be a huge help on the offense and defense.



Senior Lydon DeWisplare runs through the Grand Island Central Catholic defender's tackle. DeWisplare was a two time varsity football captain and a huge contributor for offense and defense for the Monarchs during the 2023 season. DeWisplare said, "I thought I ran the ball pretty well; you just got to lower your shoulder and get what you can." *Photo by C. Sisco*

Do pros outweigh cons of capital punishment?

By Cecilia Sisco

According to Death Penalty Information Center (DPIC), as of 2022, 55% of Americans favor the death penalty, 42% oppose, and 3% have no opinion. Reasons exist on why the country is so divided on Capital Punishment.

Each state has the electoral power to decide whether they allow the death penalty sentence. According to National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Capital Punishment is authorized in 27 states, by the federal government and the military. Many states they have opted out for life imprisonment with no possibility for parole. NCSL added, "Since 2016, 25 states enacted 66 new laws addressing state systems of capital punishment." These range from laws on execution methods, mental disability restrictions, and limits to ability to sentence the punishment.

Crimes punishable by death in the U.S. besides murder, varies from state to state, and on the federal level. According to DPIC, the Federal Government allows the death penalty sentence for espionage (spying), treason, aggravated kidnapping, trafficking large quantities of drugs, attempting, authorizing, or advising in the murder of an officer, juror, or witness in cases involving a criminal enterprise, even if murder is unsuccessful. Some states allow the penalty for aircraft hijacking, placing a bomb near a bus terminal, and aggravated assault by incarcerated; persistent felons, or murders. Many states have unclear laws on rape of a child for the death penalty. Many states allow the sentence if the victim is under a certain age; the age fluctuating between ten and fourteen.

The most commonly known and used form of execution is lethal injection. South Carolina uses electrocution as their main method of execution over lethal injection. All other states use lethal injection as their primary form. "Fifteen states have secondary authorized form of execution. This is either because lethal injection was unavailable or considered unconstitutional in the trial or the state offered the offender the option of another method," stated NCSL. Lethal injection, electrocution, gas chambers, hanging, and firing squad are the dif-

ferent forms of execution still used today.

Many argue capital punishment can help reduce crime. With the threat and understanding that one could be killed for their actions, capital punishment puts a deterrent on the mind. While the U.S. has never seen the effects of taking away the death penalty, other countries have. According to *The Week*, "Crime rates went up in the UK when the death penalty was suspended the first time." Are lower crime rates worth keeping the death penalty?

Wrongful execution is a common argument against Capital Punishment. According to DPIC, 195 people on death row have been exonerated after being wrongfully convicted since 1973. That would mean on average there has been four innocent people on death row a year since 1973. "Courts do not generally entertain claims of innocence when the defendant is dead. Defense attorneys move on to other cases where clients' lives can still be saved," stated DPIC.

Capital punishment can give retribution to the victim and family. A general assumption is people want the person who killed their loved ones to suffer. This idea brings up moral issues. As Catholics, we are supposed to practice forgiveness and let God do the punishing, so do we have the right to sentence the death penalty? Practicing those ideas is difficult when a loved one is dead. The church also teaches not to kill innocent. However, one might argue murders, rapists, and terrorists are not innocent people.

Many people argue racial undertones in relationship to capital punishment. DPIC states, "In 96% of states where there have been reviews on race and the death penalty, there was a pattern of either race of victim or race of defendant discrimination, or both." DPIC added that in several cases where a white and black person committed the same crime that black man is more likely to be sentenced the death penalty.

An argument for the death penalty is that it solves the problem of never worrying if the threat of imprisonment is not a sufficient restraint for some violent offenders. One could argue the country will not feel safe unless certain offenders are dead.

An example would be the serial killer, Ted Bundy. Bundy confessed to raping and murdering thirty women throughout the seventies, but evidence shows there were likely dozens more. Bundy escaped from imprisonment two times, killing more women in-between.

Is fear a good enough reason to kill someone? The Catechism states, "Concern for eugenics or public health cannot justify any murder, even if commanded by public authority." The remark on public health is what is important to focus on. It would be in public health to sentence the death penalty to make individuals feel safer. In the situation of public health, you could frame the death penalty as self-defense.

Two huge issues with the death penalty are the cost and botched executions. According to Nevada Legislature, "The median death penalty case costs \$1.26 million. Non-death penalty cases were counted through to the end of incarceration and were found to have a median cost of \$740,000." So, on average it costs more to kill the offender, than it does to house them for the rest of their life.

According to DPIC, the most common and easiest method of execution to be botched is lethal injection. However, sometimes the executioner cannot find a vein or gives the incorrect dosing. The idea that lethal injection is relatively painless is completely false. This method is just the least painful for the witnesses to view. "Lethal injection causes severe pain and severe respiratory distress with associated sensations of drowning, asphyxiation, panic, and terror in the overwhelming majority of cases," Equal Justice Initiative stated. The least botched execution is firing squad.

With so many pros and cons on this issue, division in opinion makes sense. Obvious moral issues exist concerning capital punishment. Though, it feels wrong to just let someone sit in prison for the rest of their life with all their necessities, plus more after committing heinous acts. All people must do their research on this topic, as well individual cases to come to a decision. Do not be the 3% with no opinion.