

UNIQUE HOBBIES AT SOUTHEAST

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ERIC HOLT

Lincoln Southeast Highschool's (LSE) Composition and Horror Literature teacher Eric Holt picks up his electric bass, checks his strings and makes sure he is plugged in. He then starts to play a bassline. As he continues to play, his bandmates around him pick up, adding their own pieces in, creating a strong metal beat. Holt in his freetime away from teaching enjoys listening to and creating metal music, and that is his own unique hobby.

Holt used to run a band with his cousin and friend but stopped due to COVID-19. That didn't stop his love for metal though, as Holt is still a metal enthusiast and enjoys listening frequently. These themes can often push people away, with them being so deep and often scary - don't worry though.

"People outside of the horror and metal communities tend to think we're scary, but almost everyone I've met in these communities are kind, generous, and funny," Holt said. "Liking intense, scary things doesn't make you an intense, scary person."

Holt has another odd hobby too. He enjoys writing and publishing short horror stories. Writing has always been something he has found interest in, reading and writing from a very young age and still into his adult life. Reading is one of Holt's oldest hobbies, with writing coming in at a close second. Holt has been writing since middle school, but only last year during the pandemic did he have time to try to get his writing published. Metal music has also been a part of Holt's life for a long time, going back into highschool.

"I've been interested in metal and experimental music since high school. When I was a teenager, I used to put on a death metal CD after school and scream along to it in my bedroom," Holt said.



PHOTO COURTESY: Eric Holt
Eric Holt (right) playing the bass.

KYA BRANCH

LSE has many students and teachers who have their own interests and hobbies. Kya Branch (9), a student at LSE, runs a podcast with her friends. "It is so much more fun than you could imagine. We basically just get to sit around and talk to each other for about an hour and record it," Branch said.

With Branch and her friends going to different schools after 8th grade, this podcast is a great way for her to spend time with these friends. The best part is they have people who listen and enjoy their podcasts.

"We actually have a pretty large group of adults that enjoy listening," Branch said. "It's called Teen Life with Cole, Kaci and Kya. You can find it on Apple Podcast or anywhere you get your podcasts."



PHOTO COURTESY: Kya Branch
Kya Branch (left) and her friends sit around their studio before recording.

LAUREL SCHMITZ

Quirky hobbies can be found over all sorts of subjects and people. LSE science teacher Laurel Schmitz recently started fermenting foods at home. Fermentation is when you take a food with yeast and take away oxygen, forcing the yeast to make energy without it. While doing so the yeast releases lactic acid which causes fermentation, which can change the flavors of the food. Some examples may be sauerkraut or yogurt. Schmitz said fermenting was the perfect hobby for her, as it mixed some of her favorite interests - science and cooking.

"Fermenting foods means you really do have a science experiment running on your kitchen counter," Schmitz said. Fermenting food is a fun hobby, which can take time but be really rewarding. While fermenting foods is quite interesting, it takes some hard work and caution.

"The most important part of fermentation is to make sure you sterilize the materials you will use by boiling them in water. This allows you to kill off any pathogens that might be contaminating the jar. Likewise, before eating your fermented foods, you must make sure the pH level of the liquid is in the proper range. You need to check that the pH level is at a range that won't allow harmful bacteria and yeast to grow," Schmitz said.

Everybody has interests, something they like or things they enjoy. Passing time with your favorite hobby is always a great way to do it. Spend time with friends, explore other interests and experiment, find what you love to do, and enjoy it, no matter how unique it may be.



PHOTO COURTESY: Laurel Schmitz
Schmitz's fermented food.