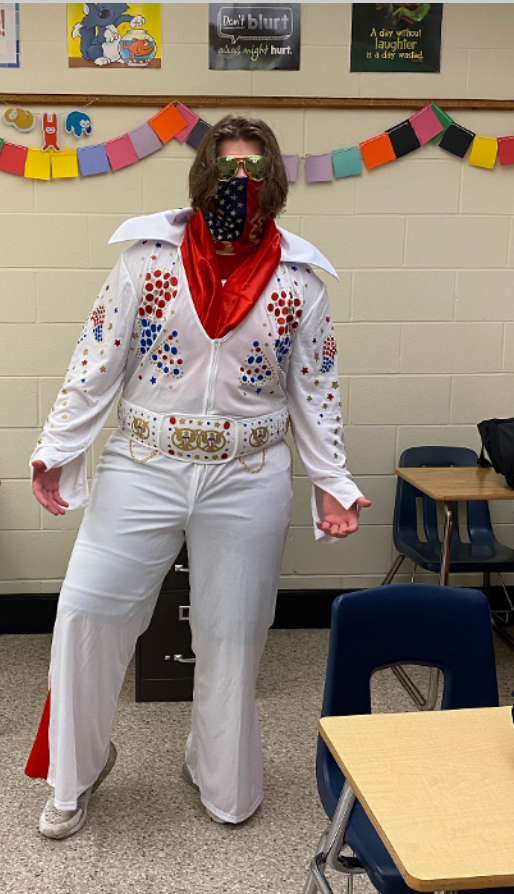


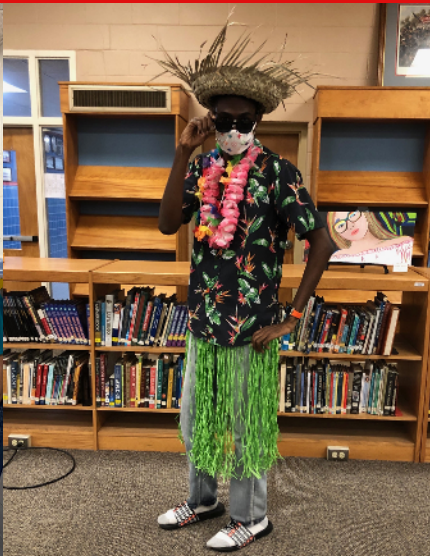
# Colonial

# COURIER

November 2020



## Spirit Week



Students and staff participate in Halloween Spirit Week. From left to right, top to bottom: Brett Foster; Malaya Clay; Mrs. Roberts, Ms. Damon; Ms. Guy, Mr. Strickler, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Vaughan, Ms. Morgan, Ms. Crowder, Mrs. Wheeler; Letaz Jones; Ms. Fenn, Mrs. McDonald, Ms. West, Ms. Crinkley, Mrs. Rochuba, Mrs. Puckett, Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Rush.

# Williams fills assistant superintendent role

by Brookelyn Martinez

“Colonial Heights Public Schools is a healthy workplace environment and is ideal when it comes to maintaining a positive outcome,” said Dr. William Sroufe, CHPS Division Superintendent. “I have

known Dr. Williams a long time, and I wanted her to be part of this incredible team.”

Dr. Cyndi Williams joined the CHPS team on July 1, 2020, as an Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services. She met Dr. Sroufe 14 years ago when they were both building

principals in Patrick County, Va.

Dr. Williams holds three degrees: a Bachelor’s in Elementary Education (PK-8) from East Tennessee State University; a Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (K-12) from Radford University; and a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (K-12) from Virginia Tech.

Dr. Williams previously held multiple positions. She taught elementary students for 10 years. Then, she was an elementary principal for six years. After that, she was a Central Office Administrator for 13 years. Her positions were Coordinator of Federal Programs, Director of Testing, Director of Instruction, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Chief Academic Officer.

“I am a passionate educator, continue to push myself to learn and grow each day, and strive to give every child a life chance,” said Dr. Williams.

Her role now is four-fold.

Photo courtesy of Cyndi Williams



“I love my work and serving students alongside our CHPS team every day,” said Dr. Williams.

She supports teachers, instructional support staff and school administrators to provide the best educational opportunities for students. She makes sure that CHPS follows the Virginia Department of Education standards and guidelines and follows federal law in regards to instructional services. She works closely with the leadership team to plan and implement the division goals and objectives as set forth by the school board. She also tries to bridge the gap between school and home to make sure that the families receive support and resources to help students.

“Dr. Williams promotes the

success of all those around her through her work,” said Dr. Sroufe. “She’s a passionate educator who seeks a lesson in every opportunity, fostering an environment of growth and collaboration.”

Dr. Williams has been married to her high school sweetheart, Robbie, for 30 years. They have three daughters together: Ginna Jones, a sixth grade math teacher in Abingdon, Va; Beth Hutchens, a Labor and Delivery RN in Roanoke, Va.; and Grace Williams, a senior at Virginia Tech.

Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal, appreciates the leadership that Dr. Williams is

Photo courtesy of Cyndi Williams



Dr. Cyndi Williams has been married to her husband for 30 years. They were high school sweethearts.

providing.

“Dr. Williams helps facilitate discussions amongst the leadership team and she helps guide us to answers,” said Mrs. Janssen. “She assists and maintains a ‘we are all in this together to best service our kids’ mentality that I love.”

Dr. Williams enjoys the students of CHPS.

“In the short time that I’ve been here, our students are respectful, have a great work ethic and love to learn,” said Dr. Williams. “I wake up every day striving to be the best that I can be for them, supporting them and preparing them for their future!”

Photo courtesy of Cyndi Williams



Dr. Cyndi Williams's family consists of her husband and their three daughters plus their significant others. The daughters live in the western area of Virginia.

# Burnett aims to listen, understand all students

by Kayla Dougherty and  
Caroline Woodward

Photo courtesy of James Burnett



Mr. Burnett strives to always be available to talk with students who need guidance to be the best students they can be.

“Take each day as it comes,” said Mr. James Burnett, assistant principal, about his approach to this job and its demands.

After graduating from CHHS in 2001, Mr. Burnett graduated from Longwood University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science in mathematics and a teaching license. He taught math for five years. After the last principal left, Mr. Burnett took advantage of an opportunity to move up in his career.

A long-time influence in Mr. Burnett's life is Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal. Mrs. Janssen was Mr. Burnett's English teacher for grades 9, 10 and 12.

“It is awesome to see my former students fulfill roles as instructional leaders who give back,” said Mrs. Janssen. “I just want my kids to be good people who give back. I am so proud. To see that transition is an honor.”

Following in Mrs. Janssen's footsteps, Mr. Burnett now has students look to him for guidance. Steven Raigns, 11, appreciates the time Mr. Burnett has spent with him.

“Our relationship got better over the months, but he is like a father to me because I look up to him,” said Raigns.

Even though Mr. Burnett is content in his career, he still has challenges at his job. The COVID pandemic has forced him to make

some unprecedented decisions.

“It is a sad time, but we are doing the best we can,” said Mr. Burnett.

Telling a senior he/she will not be graduating, trying to help students who have substance problems and handling the death of a student or staff member are among Mr. Burnett's most troubling duties.

A common complaint among teenagers is not being heard. Mr. Burnett's goal is to listen to all students.

“If I would have never made the mistakes I have and had to go to his office, I may have never been able to realize what was really important,” said Sara Rudd, 12. “Thank you, Mr. Burnett, for being the person who made me realize what I needed to change to become a better student and person.”

# Students face a whole new way of learning

by Madison Marchant

A year ago, no one could have imagined that our school year looks the way it does now - partly virtual. According to Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal, about 50 percent of the school decided to go online.

"I chose virtual because I expected it to be much easier since I don't have to get all dressed and burn my gas on the drive to school," said Emmanuel Sampson, 11. "I thought I could simply open my computer and be in school. For the most part that is what happened, but the workload was not what I expected at all."

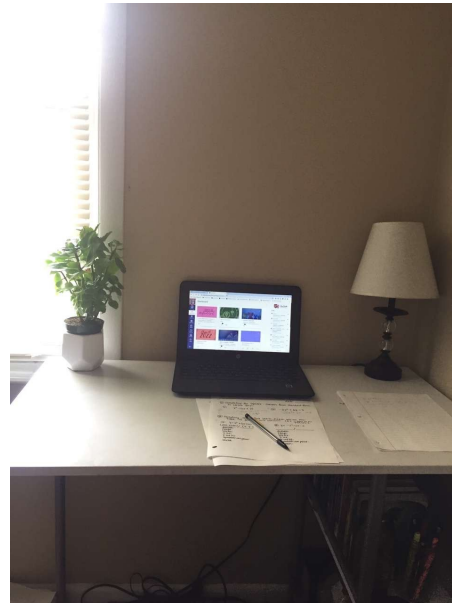
The teachers who are partly or completely virtual miss some elements of a traditional classroom environment.

"I miss the spontaneous interaction that occurs between students and teachers when we are in person," said Mrs. Angela Haden, English 10 teacher, who is all virtual. "I believe it's

the interaction that helps build relationships and helps with learning."

Some virtual teachers' biggest challenges are the

**Photo by Emmanuel Sampson**



**Despite the technological issues, students and staff have been doing their best to make the school year successful.**

lack of communication. Some students do not often talk during the virtual classes.

"When I am not talking, the virtual classroom is silent and can be lonely," said Mrs. Haden.

"One of my biggest struggles with teaching online is trying to come up with engaging activities that will encourage interaction not just between me and the students, but also between

students," said Mrs. Haden. "Another big struggle is that I miss being with people -- students and co-workers."

Mr. Micheal Smielecki, psychology, World History 1, and government teacher, and Mr. Brian Seely, Algebra 1 and 2 teacher, both agree with Mrs. Haden.

"The lack of interaction makes the virtual classes very difficult and, might I say, boring," said Mr. Seely. "It is very exhausting."

Along with the brick-and-mortar students, the online students and teachers are experiencing some technological issues.

"We are having tons of problems with virtual," said Miah Stevens, 11.

Although the virtual students and teachers are having problems, there are always benefits.

"It is good for those students who do not like the classroom setting and would prefer the more anonymous setting of virtual class," said Mr. Smielecki.



Some virtual students like to set up a specific place for their learning.

“Overall, I think my relationship with the students is good. I’ve tried to stress that we are all learning this together,” said Mrs. Haden. “I think we have all been very patient with each other as we navigate this new way of learning, and we are helping each other out the best we can. I think my students know

that I am fair and that as long as they are upfront with me with any struggles they might have with technology, I will work with them the best I can and not penalize them for issues that are beyond their control.”

The teachers and students also seem to enjoy not having to wear a mask and some

other benefits.

“The perks of being online would be that I control my environment and work space,” said Sampson. “I didn’t have to worry about which teachers liked their air conditioning blasting or which ones had saunas in their room. Instead, I could simply wake up, get in my chair with a blanket and start school. I even bought myself a dwarf bamboo tree, but he’s dying now.”

Both Stevens and Sampson would like their senior year to be face-to-face.

“I would like my senior year to be face-to-face because I feel that as a senior I would need any opportunities and information I could get since I would be leaving that year, and so much of the opportunities I find are usually through common conversations with teachers and friends, but so much of that is lost due to the online setting,” said Sampson. “Also, I know this sounds ambitious, but I would like us to have a stable control over the pandemic by next year.”

# Students continue traditional brick-and-mortar learning

by Riley Bridgman

"I chose brick and mortar because I wanted to make my senior year as 'normal' as possible," said Maria Elena Smith, 12.

Due to the pandemic this year, students were able to choose if they went virtual or brick and mortar for school.

"I feel as safe at the school as I do going anywhere in public," said Mr. Timothy Ralph, Health and Physical Education teacher.

"Our administration has done a great job putting protocols in place, and I feel like students are doing what they are supposed to do," said Mr. Ralph.

In each classroom, a hand sanitizer dispenser has been installed, and desks are spaced apart. Smaller classes and one-way hallways are another change. Limitations have been set on the amount of people allowed in bathrooms.

Along with that, students and teachers have to wear

face masks while inside the building. Temperatures are checked for every student before they enter. School days have also been cut shorter, and a new schedule has been implemented.

"I like the schedule so far because it is more manageable," said Johnathan Bandy, 9.

The schedule this year is from 8 a.m. to 12:25 p.m. The classes rotate every other day. On odd days, students go to their first and third blocks. On even days, students go to their second and fourth blocks.

Each class is two hours with a 10-minute class changing period. An extra 15 minutes has been added to the first class each day to allow time for the Positive Action lesson.

During the 10 minutes between classes, teachers sanitize desks and chairs so they are clean for the next class coming in. The schedule does not include lunch.

"I miss lunch the most," said Jessica Sprouse, 10. "Just

being able to eat and laugh with your friends at school was always something I look forward to every day last year."

This year, there is no lunch, but there is food provided in the cafeteria. The cafeteria gives out free breakfast and lunch every day.

Photo courtesy of Maria Elena Smith



Smith goes to the gym before or after school to fill in the extra time she has.

"It's nice to be able to come together with those around us and get through this pandemic together!" said Smith, 12. "Even though we cannot see everyone's smiling faces, it is nice to know that we are all there for each other!!!"

# Seniors take on a new level of stress

by Meghan Thomas

“With college applications, A.P. and honors classes, work, and COVID taking away that ‘senior experience’ we all dreamed of, it has been quite a challenge,” said Madison Smith, 12.

With the early action option becoming more popular, college applications are due before the end of the year. This has become one of the highest stressors for seniors although that is usually just one of the many factors bringing seniors stress.

“Having to juggle two A.P.s, two honors classes, college applications, clubs and finding volunteer opportunities during the pandemic is all weight,” said Damian Malone, 12.

Along with the average stress seniors are under, they are now under a rare circumstance of dealing with it all during a pandemic.

“With everything being uncertain and things changing from day to day, nothing is stable, and that is

stressful to think about,” said Devotha Temu, 12.

Smith believes COVID-19 has changed her senior year for the worst.

“It has taken a lot away from myself and my friends, and our senior year,” said Smith. “There are so many new guidelines, rules and regulations now, and it just makes me sad to see that we won’t be able to have the typical ‘senior year experience’ that you see everyone else talk about and have.”

“The pandemic has changed college application requirements, so having to adjust to those requirements was a little hectic,” said Bass.

Schools have begun adding stress management and mental health lessons into the curriculum, and many seniors appreciate the new Positive Action time.

“I feel that it is something that should’ve been done a long time ago, but I’m grateful and happy that it is being done,” said Temu.

Malone believes the shorter

Photo courtesy of Phillip Dickey



From left to right, top to bottom: Seniors Benson Yang, William Mehfoud, Damian Malone, Nicholas Hess and Phillip Dickey study for four hours, on Zoom, for an upcoming Calculus test.

Krista Bass, 12, also sees how COVID has changed college applications, including new essay questions and optional testing.

school day but longer classes has added to his stress.

“When listening to someone for a long period of time, especially two hours, at some



point you begin to stop paying attention," said Malone. "This leads to misinformation or retaining no information at all, which either means more studying or a bad grade."

Unlike Malone, Smith believes the shorter school days have helped reduce her stress.

"With only two classes a day, on an even-odd schedule, I can better stay on task with what things I need to get done and knowing that I have time to do them," said Smith. "I also have late arrival on even days this year, so that helps me get the sleep that I might have not gotten

the night before."

Bass believes her stress is an effective motivator.

"I think that stress makes me more motivated to get things done," said Bass. "If I wasn't stressed, I probably would not take things as seriously as I do."

Austin Bennett, 12, believes a little bit of stress can actually be beneficial.

"Being stressed about something means you think it is important," said Bennett.

Aside from schoolwork, social media has become a high stressor for seniors.

"I try not to spend too much time on social media, but as a

teenager in 2020, that is quite hard to do," said Smith. "Some people use social media as a way to hide behind a screen and tear others down. I have witnessed this a lot this year, and although I try to stay out of it as best as I can, sometimes involvement is inevitable."

According to The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the best ways to relieve teen stress is by exercising regularly, having a regular sleep schedule, learning relaxation techniques and building a network of friends and family that help to cope with stress in a positive way.

## **"It's A Wonderful Life"**

**What: a virtual production by the Colonial Players**

**When: Friday-Saturday, Dec. 4-5 at 6:30 p.m.**

**According to IMDb, George Bailey has spent the majority of his life giving everything to the people of Bedford Falls. On Christmas Eve, George's Uncle, Billy, loses a massive amount of money for their business while intending to deposit it at the bank. After the bank realizes the shortage of money, George realizes that he will be blamed for the company's loss and is sent to jail. Then, an angel, who goes by the name of Clarence, helps George with his mishaps. He also helps him gain his "wings" by showing him what Christmas would be like if he hadn't been born.**

# Freshmen navigate through first year during a global pandemic, virtual learning

by Heather Claytor and Chloe Russell

All freshmen have those first days of high school jitters, but this year is a little different. Wearing a mask and staying six feet apart has become a normal routine every school day.

When starting high school, students' expectations range from new friends to fun classes to freshman activities, but this year virtual learning changes the game. Mrs. Gretchen Galderise, Algebra 1 teacher who just started her third year at CHHS, sees all the struggles students face during this change.

"My heart breaks for the freshman," said Mrs. Galderise.

The transition from eighth to ninth grade is stressful already: understanding how to balance the high school workload can be tricky. Freshman experiences will still happen, just in a different format. Leaders are trying to

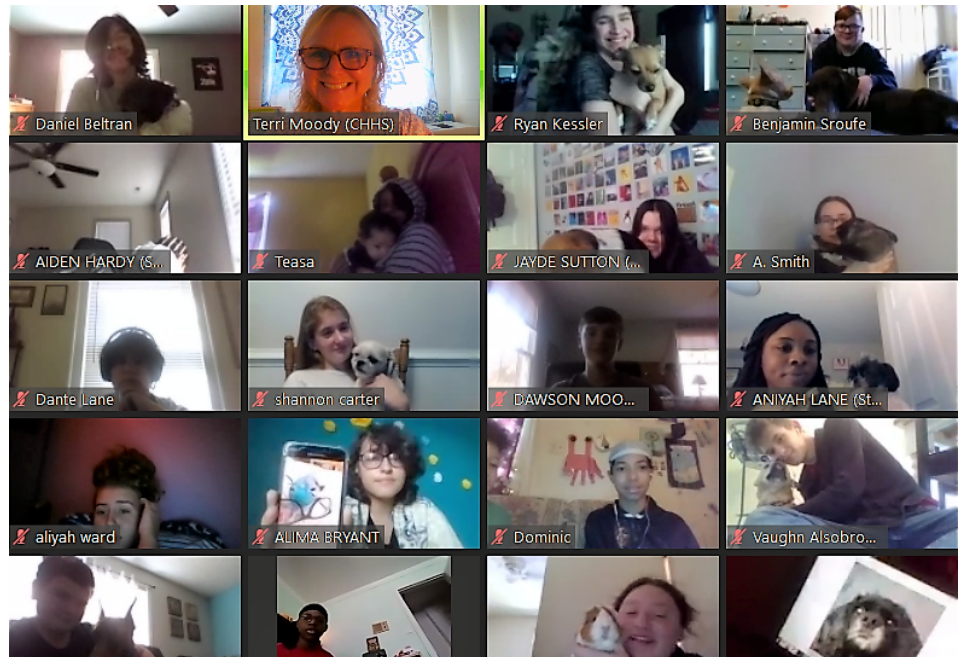
provide as many traditional opportunities as they can while adhering to health and safety guidelines.

"The in-person kids are doing a good job of keeping up with the safety measures put in place," said Mrs. Galderise. "They are still making new friends and creating memories, just slightly further apart than before."

six feet apart and following other safety measures can cause stress. Similarly, the newness of virtually learning provides its challenges. Students and staff are leaning on one another for support.

"The quote about being kind to everyone you meet because you don't know what they are going through is very relevant to us right now," said Mrs. Galderise.

Photo by Terri Moody



Mrs. Moody's English 9 virtual class has many students who are not only experiencing their first year of high school in an odd way, but also making the best of the circumstances.

Along with the struggles of trying to get used to the high school environment, keeping

Mrs. Galderise hopes that if the Class of 2024 can learn anything from this year, it will

be to have an appreciation for the flexibility and determination their families have for them.

One of the upsides to the world shutting down is getting to spend more time with your family. Families are able to take time out of their busy lives to come together.

Some freshmen like being home all day so they can get food and go to the bathroom whenever they want to.

"It's kind of hard to learn online for me, but I'm getting more comfortable with it,"

said David Grimes, 9.

When not at school, Grimes plays sports, video games and listens to music. Grimes benefits from virtual learning because it gives him the feeling like he is in class. Although his freshman year has started like no other kind of year, he is getting through it. He plans to come on campus for next semester.

Some students struggle with internet problems and having their teacher get kicked out of Zoom sometimes.

"It either happens for a few seconds or a few minutes," said Vaughn Alsobrook, 9.

These struggles aren't the only obstacles students have to deal with; there are also struggles with students' sleep schedule, mainly because of the different school hours.

Alsobrook is very worried about remembering all of the content teachers say when they are all on Zoom.

"Sometimes we forget what they said in that two-hour class and need a refresher," said Alsobrook.

## Classes elect officers for school year

### Freshman

President: Rylei Buck  
Vice-President: Christian Moaning  
Secretary: Bracie Bennett  
Treasurer: Kennedy Saunders  
Historian: Catherine Alderson

### Junior

President: Camille Adenauer  
Vice-President: Mason Bennett  
Secretary: Heather Colletti  
Treasurer: Emmanuel Sampson  
Historian: Ava Foulkrod

### Sophomore

President: Grayson Burchard  
Vice-President: Nick Sprinkle  
Secretary: Riley Bridgman  
Treasurer: Jenna Mason  
Historian: Jessica Sprouse

### Senior

President: Tess Synowski  
Vice-President: Mattie Smith  
Secretary: Austin Bennett  
Treasurer: Caroline Pond  
Historian: Sarah Smith

# Teachers adapt to new classes, schedules

by Jenna Mason

Under the current circumstances, many teachers have had to make new adjustments for instructing. Some have had to move classes and others have

“This has totally changed my day-to-day teaching,” said Mrs. White. “I was used to having plenty of time to plan and work with my Power Research class, but now that I have two English classes and two Power Research classes, I

Despite the challenges at school, there have also been some personal challenges for Mrs. White. She hasn’t had much time on the weekend because she is trying to catch up on school work, which has made it difficult for her to find some free time.

Photo by Jenna Mason



Even though Mrs. White misses her library duties, she is getting back into the swing of teaching English and her Power Research class.

had to pick up a whole new subject to teach.

Mrs. Kathleen White, Media Center Specialist and Power Research teacher, adjusted to a dramatic change in her schedule. She went from running the library to teaching English again after many years.

have no time to do anything.”

One of the biggest challenges for Mrs. White is that students and teachers still think that they can walk through the library. Not only does it make the person feel a little embarrassed, but also interrupts the classes that Mrs. White is teaching.

“Even though Mrs. White is under a great amount of stress this year due to all changes from COVID, she always comes to class with a smile on her face and works so hard to make sure all of her students are on track” said Lauren Anderson, 12, Power Research student.

Another drastic change is Mr. Mickey Alderson, Art 1 and Art 4 teacher, going from teaching in the art room to teaching art in the cafeteria.

Except for the lack of supplies, there aren’t many challenges to teaching art in the cafeteria. Due to storage issues, Mr. Alderson was unable to take most of the art supplies into the cafeteria.

One of the major benefits of having art class in the

cafeteria is the amount of space. Each student is able to have his or her own space for their belongings, and there is a much more comfortable feel.

"I am happy to be teaching face-to-face with my students," said Mr. Alderson. "Even though I can't see their smiles, I can tell they are proud of their work."

**Photo courtesy of Mickey Alderson**



**The art students are still able to make art while being socially distanced in the cafeteria. Not only does this setting allow creativity to stay alive, but also also gives the students a feeling of normalcy.**

One more change is that Mrs. Mary Vaughan, college and career specialist, is now spending less time with seniors and more time supervising students with symptoms of COVID.

Mrs. Vaughan is supervising the treatment room, where students who are experiencing COVID symptoms go and wait for their parents to pick them up.

Mrs. Vaughan is not having as much interaction with students as she did before. She is no longer working one-on-one with

seniors to help them prepare their college applications and look for scholarships.

Mrs. Vaughan is making the best of it by walking the hallways to stay active. Sometimes she will also work

on documents for Virtual Academy K-5. Mrs. Vaughan is happy that she is able to do what she can to help students under unusual circumstances.

"I am grateful to our leadership team and the work that has been done for everyone's safety and health," said Mrs. Vaughan. "I am so glad to be a part of a school district that worked to allow our students to choose virtual or brick-and-mortar and know that I did my part to make it work."

The staff has responded quite well to the changes that have been made, according to Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal. Teachers had to be shifted out of their classrooms, some to assist with bus loading, and a couple were even shifted to teach elementary schools.

"In general, everyone is doing their best to make this situation as right as they can make it," said Mrs. Janssen. "Seeing our students and coming to school each day gives us all a sense of normalcy and community."

# CHHS staff's kids have a safe place for virtual school

by Madison Marchant

Since COVID hit, some parents have been struggling to find a safe place where their kids can go to do virtual school while their parents are at work. A new program called Little People's School allows the CHHS staff to go to work while their children are at the Tech Center being cared for and supervised by staff members.

"The purpose is to provide a safe place for staff members' children to continue their education through virtual learning from their home school," said Mrs. Janet Rosson, EFE/Collaborative Teacher and Job Shadowing Coordinator, who supervises the grades 3-5 group.

Their typical day starts at 7:15 a.m. and ends at around 1- 1:15 p.m. For the grades 3-5 group, they start out eating breakfast, they exercise and then they work on character education. At 9:15 a.m., they go onto their computers, meet up with their teachers and do their

assignments. Because they go to different schools, they eat lunch at different times.

The grades 3-5 group is well behaved, according to Mrs. Rosson, but with the grades K-2 group, things can get a little tricky.

"They need constant reminders and reinforcement," said Mrs. Debbie Knowles, Universal Learning Lab Facilitator and VVA Mentor, who supervises the K-2 group. Mrs. Knowles devotes her time to "coming up with ideas they would love to do to engage them during down time and making sure they have everything they would need to work on their assignments."

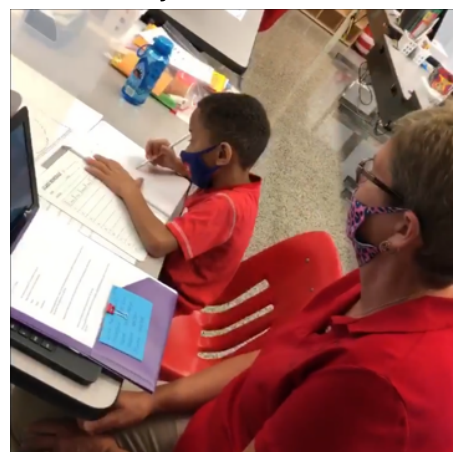
"Their desk space is set up as if they were in a K-2 environment, as well as the classroom," said Mrs. Knowles. "Thanks to Mrs. Young, the childcare teacher, I am able to borrow items from her to use in my classroom."

Parents who have sent their children to the Little People's School definitely rely on this

program.

"When I found out the teachers and staff were able to bring their kids to work, I was very happy because I did not know what my wife and I were going to do if our kids did not have child care," said

Photo courtesy of Debbie Knowles



Mrs. Knowles helps with keeping the children on task and engaged with their work.

Mr. Ryan Shepperson, paraprofessional. "If it wasn't for this program, I would've taken days off just to watch them at home during this pandemic."

Mr. Shepperson has two children in the program:

William is eight years old and in the third grade, and Moses is five years old and in kindergarten.

Mrs. Lori McDonald sends her two boys, Eli who is in

second grade and Owen in fourth grade.

"It is a great program for our family, and we are very thankful the district is providing it for us," said Mrs.

kids fully virtual. He still monitors them, but having them come with me to Colonial Heights allows him to meet with clients or go into the office a day or two a week as some of his work is more

"They enjoy the program so much," said Mr. Shepperson. "Here's a quick story of how their first day went. Once we came back to our home, Will and Moses could not wait to tell their mom about their day. They both made friends, and it was the first time they were able to interact with other kids, instead of their cousins."

Photo courtesy of Janet Rosson



The children like to be able to see other kids while going virtual with their teachers.

McDonald, Environmental Science and Biology 2 teacher.

"Luckily, my husband is able to work from home with our

easily done at the office."

Mr. Shepperson's children and Mrs. McDonald's children seem to love the program.

Mrs. McDonald's children are also enjoying the program.

"Owen likes eating lunch on the picnic table and playing checkers with Mrs. Rosson," said Mrs. McDonald. "Eli likes using the bouncy balls that you sit on. We definitely don't have those at home.

"Since they are in separate classrooms, I think the best part is they get a break from each other and get to interact with other kids," said Mrs. McDonald.

# Springs, Waltman to lead SCA

by Riley Bridgman and Gavin Jarvis

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Roberts



The SCA holds fundraisers to be able to hold activities like Color Wars.

“The SCA is a group of students who make decisions for the entire student body about fun activities, such as Spirit Week for Homecoming and the end-of-year picnic, so we promote school spirit within the school,” said Mrs. Elizabeth Roberts, SCA Sponsor.

SCA President, Gennese Springs, and Vice-President, Kristen Waltman, were the only two students to run for their desired positions.

“I decided to run for president because I simply

love being a part of the SCA!” said Springs, 12. “I also

wanted to run for president because a lot of kids may feel like SCA is ‘lame,’ ‘only for the smart kids,’ or they are hesitant to get involved.”

Springs is determined to think she can prove to everyone that the SCA is meant for any type of person to join. She was elected as vice-president of the SCA last school year. This year, she is stepping up to take leadership of the SCA as president.

“Because we’ve all been isolated and quarantined for

so long, it will be hard for people to feel involved or completely integrated into our school’s community,” said Springs. “Therefore, I would love to create as many opportunities as possible for students to feel as involved as possible.”

Even though the pandemic has affected everyone, including the SCA, Springs strives to get students involved as much as possible, hoping to make everything seem normal.

The pandemic also affected the officers in the SCA. There was only an election/application process for the President, Vice-President and Executive Council.

“Being SCA Vice-President is an excellent way to explore leadership amongst my peers,” said Waltman, 12. “It means I am active and involved in an organization that helps put together the events that the student body loves.”



Photo courtesy of Kristen Waltman



Waltman's favorite SCA experience is presenting her speech for secretary to the entire school last year.

Waltman has been a part of the SCA since her freshman year. Last year she was elected as the SCA secretary.

Sarah Smith, 12, is serving her first year in the executive council. She applied to have an opportunity to be a leader.

"I felt like being a part of SCA would help me learn a lot about leadership and

responsibility," said Smith.

Mrs. Roberts believes the SCA is an integral part of the school.

"I think the SCA has a positive influence on the school and promotes school spirit," said Mrs. Roberts. "It gives students a way to get involved in a club other than an honor society."

## New gaming systems, video games released

by Tyrese Seabon

Many gamers have been waiting for November 2020. Along with the PlayStation 5 being released on Nov. 12, the Xbox series X was released on Nov. 10.

According to gamespot.com, there are two different types of PlayStation 5s, one that has a disk drive that costs \$500 and one that has a digital drive that costs \$400.

To even get to pre-order the PlayStation 5, people had to put in their PlayStation 4 details and enter a lottery system. People could have also waited in a line outside of GameStop to pre-order it.

Some students are eagerly awaiting the purchase of the PlayStation 5.

"When I saw the trailer I was like - yo - that's lit," said Dillon Longnecker, 11. "I hope I can get it."

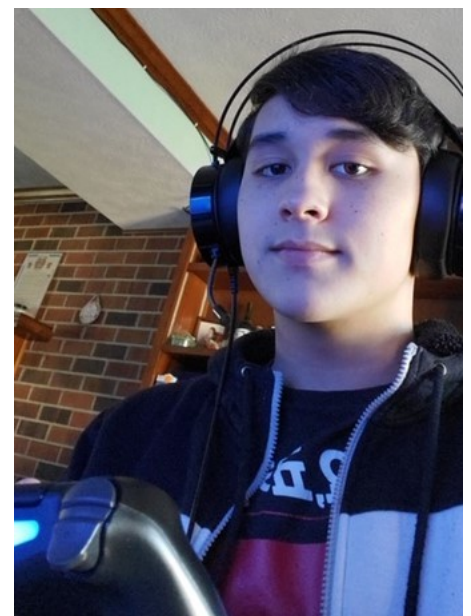
Some notable games that will be released in November and December are Marvel's Spider-Man: Miles Morales, Horizon Forbidden West, Gran Turismo Sport, NBA 2K21 and EA SPORTS FIFA 21.

Along with the PlayStation 5 coming out, games for the PlayStation 4 are being released as well. The games that are being released are: Marvel's Avengers, Tony

Hawk's Pro Skater 1+2, Twin Mirrors, Elder Scrolls Online and Final Fantasy VII Remake.

Longnecker is most looking forward to the release of Cyberpunk 2077 and Blue Protocol.

Photo courtesy of Dillon Longnecker



Longnecker plays video games to relieve stress and spend time with friends.

# COVID does not put a stop to volunteering

by Jenna Mason

Some clubs at CHHS require volunteer hours to maintain membership eligibility. With COVID impacting the community through social distancing, masks and gloves, some students are having trouble meeting those requirements.

Mrs. Betsy Johnson, co-sponsor of JOI Club, leads one of the clubs that require volunteer hours; however, the standards are more relaxed this semester.

“We are not requiring volunteer hours but are offering some opportunities if both parents and students are in agreement that the student can volunteer,” said Mrs. Johnson.

Some opportunities for JOI Club members have been the making of the Brunswick Stew and distributing candy for Halloween at the Optimist Club as people drove by in cars. Certain precautions, like staying socially distanced and wearing masks and gloves, were taken.

Damian Malone, 12, has been one of the many students who has volunteered through the JOI Club. He recently volunteered at the Optimist Club yard sale.

“When you are volunteering, you are representing the club and school that you are volunteering for,” said Malone. “You should also show respect to the people in

students have been volunteering at the high tunnel most days after school.

With limitations, including socially distancing, wearing masks inside and outside, limiting the number of people allowed at a time and signing a COVID release form, many dedicated students are committed to the high tunnel.

Photo by Jenna Mason



Even with limitations, there are still many ways to participate at the high tunnel.

charge and follow their directions. You now have to wear a mask to any event now, as well.”

Mr. Bill Ryan, AgriProject leader and retired science teacher, has motivated students to volunteer. Some

Jennifer Buenaventura, 10, Ashley Hegwald, 12, Jennifer Hersee, 10, Trent Kirchoff, 11 and Nestor Milan, 10, are just several of the students who have volunteered at the high tunnel.

Photo by Jenna Mason



Nestor Milan has been volunteering at the high tunnel since the beginning of October.

“Students seem to really want to get involved with other people again,” said Mr. Ryan.

“The students working with us now may start to come get volunteer hours, but they seem to enjoy the work and most are coming back.”

One way Mr. Ryan is keeping track of health and COVID symptoms is through a record book. Each day students' temperatures are

recorded, and students are asked a series of questions to thoroughly check for symptoms.

In a very short amount of time, Gifford Scott, 9, has already clocked 27 volunteer hours.

Scott has been volunteering at the Colonial Heights Food Pantry since summertime. He found out about this opportunity through his father, who had previously volunteered there, and decided to join him one day. Since then, Scott has been volunteering as often as he can.

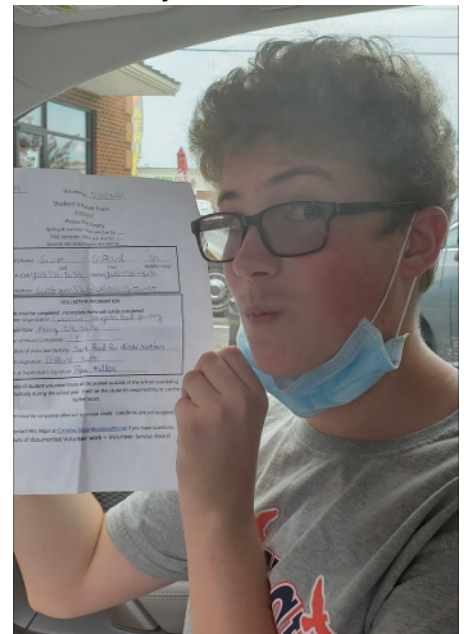
“I have been going to the food pantry,” said Scott. “Every Thursday I sort and bag produce, and on Fridays we distribute the food.”

Besides the mandatory PPE and social distancing, food pantry volunteers have made other adjustments. Before

COVID hit, clients could walk into the building and get their food. Now, volunteers must take out the groceries and load the cars themselves.

“There are so many families that deserve better quality of life but are failing to receive help, especially during quarantine,” said Scott. “The best way to ensure that people are getting the help that is needed is by putting forth in your community and signing up to volunteer

Photo courtesy of Gifford Scott



Gifford Scott has been using his time to do some good for the community.

## Local organizations provide opportunities to volunteer

Colonial Heights Food Pantry  
Chesterfield Food Bank  
Colonial Heights Animal Shelter

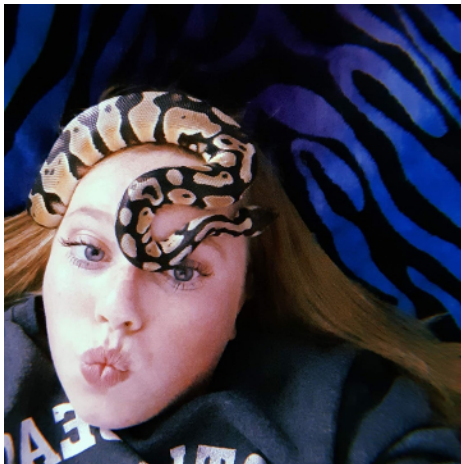
chfoodpantry.org  
chesterfieldfoodbank.org  
<http://www.colonialheightsva.gov/295/Animal-Control-Shelter>

# Staff, students enjoy exotic pets

by Riley Bridgman and Gracie Griffin

Not all pets are cute, cuddly, warm and fluffy. Students and teachers have a wide variety of unusual pets.

Photo courtesy of Laci Young



Young keeps her snake, Zelda, indoors in a tank.

“Most of my friends are scared of snakes, so when they come over, I will try and prove to them that she is actually really nice, and some of them have overcome their fear,” said Laci Young, 10.

Young has owned her snake, Zelda, for about a year, and Ashton Mackenzie, 10, has owned a snake since December 2018.

According to petco.com, ball pythons are snakes indigenous to West and

Central Africa. While hatchlings can be up to 10 inches long, adult ball pythons can grow from 4 to 5 feet long in size, with females often growing larger than the males. Many ball pythons live up to 30 years in captivity if taken care of properly.

“You have to know a lot of specific information, like what to feed it, the temperature the cage should be, the humidity and what to do if certain things happen to it, or the snake will die,” said Mackenzie.

To take care of his snake, Mackenzie has to clean the cage to get rid of food not eaten and shedded skin. He also has to buy food, replace lights and buy bigger tanks as the snake gets bigger.

Wild snakes can be a struggle for other pet owners.

“Keeping snakes out of the chicken coops” is a challenge for Mrs. Lesly McBride, Marketing/Fashion Marketing Teacher, DECA Advisor and Cooperative Education Coordinator.

Mrs. McBride has 18 egg-laying hens of differing varieties. She has enjoyed raising her chickens since they were two days old and could “fit in the palm of her hand.” Her chickens are very social, with some even wanting to be picked up and petted.

“They provide us fresh eggs every day, and they eat a variety of bugs (pests) on our property,” said Mrs. McBride.

Mrs. McBride has owned her chickens for over three years

Photo courtesy of Lesly McBride



Mrs. McBride's hens lay brown colored eggs.

and would still keep her chickens even if she could go back in time.

Photo courtesy of Rene Rush



Mrs. Rush adopted her dog, Gizmo, when he was 8 weeks old.

Not all exotic pets are unusual ones.

Mrs. Rene Rush, an Algebra 1 teacher, owns a Xoloitzcuintli, Gizmo, and an American Hairless Terrier, Chaos.

Both of the terriers have little to no hair on their bodies.

“Owning hairless dogs has allowed me to be able to have pets because I’m allergic to all animals,” said Mrs. Rush. “They still have allergens (dander and saliva), but I don’t react as much to them.

These types of hairless dogs are expensive. They have to wear sunscreen in the

summer so they don't burn or get skin cancer and sweaters in the winter to prevent them from getting cold. Hairless dogs like these are prone to

Photo courtesy of Rene Rush



Mrs. Rush adopted Chaos, an American Hairless Terrier, when he was five years old. Adopting hairless dogs has allowed Mrs. Rush to experience the joys of pet ownership even though she has pet allergies.

acne.

“Most vets have never seen these breeds of dogs so they don’t know how to treat their skin conditions or breed-specific abnormalities,” said Mrs. Rush.

Exotic pets, no matter what animal, may be difficult to keep safe and healthy.

“With any pet, it takes a lot of time, money, and commitment to make sure the animal lives a happy life, so knowing you can do that is a big thing to decide before getting one,” said Mackenzie.

# Rock world mourns loss of Eddie Van Halen

by Ryan Bell

Energetic, passionate artist Eddie Van Halen died from complications involving throat cancer on Oct. 6 at the age of 65. He was the lead guitarist and original member of Van Halen, a powerhouse rock band that rose to tremendous popularity in the 1980s.

Van Halen's signature songs include "Runnin' With the Devil," "Panama," "Right Now," "Why Can't This Be Love?" and, of course, "Jump," their only number one hit, which topped the pop singles charts in 1984.

Mr. Tracey Boyd, Biology 2 and ecology teacher, is long-time fan of Eddie Van Halen and his band.

"I've been listening to them since my years at the junior high school," said Mr. Boyd. "That's over 40 years, and I still enjoy their music!"

Eddie Van Halen was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame for selling more than 80 million albums

worldwide, and VH1 ranked the band seventh on a list of 100 Greatest Hard Rock Artists.

Geezer Butler of Black Sabbath called Eddie Van Halen "one of the nicest, down to earth men I have ever met and toured with," according to [cnn.com](http://cnn.com).

Eddie Van Halen truly was ahead of his time when he was playing his music on stage. Mr. Boyd described his guitar playing as "blazing-fast fingers."

"I don't know how he made those crazy sounds with his guitar," said Boyd.

Photo from [ultimateclassicrock.com](http://ultimateclassicrock.com)



Eddie Van Halen collaborated with Michael Jackson on the "Thriller" album and performed "Beat It" with Jackson during Jackson's Victory Tour in Irving, Texas, according to [cnn.com](http://cnn.com).

# Yang chosen as October Senior of the Month

by Ryleigh Hedge and Meghan Thomas

Soon Benson Yang, 12, October Senior of the Month, will continue his education in either the business or the science field. Until then, he will get the most out of his unusual senior year.

"My dream school is Columbia University," said Yang. "My other top choices are UVA and NYU."

Yang is excited about graduating but knows he will miss his teachers and friends.

Mrs. Dana Barefoot, chemistry teacher, helped him a lot throughout his high school years.

"Mrs. Barefoot has inspired me by teaching me to be a better person in life," said Yang.

Mrs. Barefoot knows she will forever remember Yang's expensive shoes and his smile; she said she can still see his smile even through his mask.

"He has the most expensive tennis shoes of anyone I

know," said Mrs. Barefoot. "He is intelligent, humble, kind, ambitious and charitable."

Photo courtesy of Benson Yang



**Benson Yang is enjoying his senior year even with all the new and unusual precautions .**

His favorite memory at CHHS was being in Mrs. Kathryn Garrett's World History 1 class.

"Mrs. Garrett has taught me to keep moving forward even if I run into a problem," said Yang.

Mrs. Garrett knows schools comes easily to Yang, yet he still works hard and never brags about his success.

"Benson is an intelligent, sweet and caring young man,"

said Mrs. Garrett. "He is super humble around his classmates and friends."

Mrs. Garrett will miss the funny and serious conversations they have had over the past couple of years and will never forget about how he always looks for the good in people.

"He is super easy to get along with and respects everyone he knows," said Mrs. Garrett.

Outside of school, Yang hangs out with friends, spends time with family and has a job at Chick-fil-A.

"I am really enjoying my senior year," said Yang "I love my family and friends."

When his parents found out he was Senior of the Month, they were very proud.

"My parents inspire me the most," said Yang.

Throughout the past couple of years, Yang has become involved in many clubs and held quite a few leadership positions.

"I am the VP of SNHS,

Executive Board Member of NHS, member of Beta, member of Mu Alpha Theta, Treasurer of NEHS, Historian of Diversity Club, Treasurer of Interact, Treasurer of JOI, member of Key Club and I am an Ambassador," said Yang.

Throughout his high school career, Yang said he struggled

with getting enough sleep and with a few of the AP classes he took.

Yang advises underclassmen to be yourself, be involved and enjoy high school. He said he wouldn't relive anytime he had in high school.

"I did everything I could," said Yang.

Lastly, Yang is thankful for the people around him.

"I would like to thank my family, friends and teachers for everything," said Yang. "I'm very grateful for them."

## Teens spend money on food, clothes

by Tamiya Waller

Some students get a certain amount of money from an allowance, gift or maybe a job. Seventy percent of parents in the U.S give their kid an allowance of \$9.06 weekly, according to Wtop.com.

"I don't get or have an allowance, but I do make money," said Neveah Amari Brooks, 10. "I have a job or either I ask my parents."

Brooks tries to spend her money wisely.

"If I need something I would spend my money on that first,

said Brooks. "Then, if I want something later and my needs are handled, I would get what I want or save up."

Brooks buys items that benefit her and looks at prices before buying.

Brianna Henderson, 10, also does not get an allowance but finds a way to make money.

"To make money I babysit and get paid every other week," said Henderson.

Barry Osogu, 10, gets an allowance and admits he could improve his spending habits.

"I get an allowance, \$20 twice a month," said Osogu, 10. "I do nothing to get an allowance, but I get it from my dad only, and I don't spend my money wisely."

No matter how teens get their money, the average teenager spends over \$2600 per year, according to lexingtonlaw.com. The site states that teens spend most of their money on food, with Chick-fil-A and Starbucks being the most popular restaurants, and on clothing, with Nike being the top choice.



# COVID-19 postpones sports seasons

by Caroline Woodward

Last year, many complications regarding sports within the tri-cities

Courtesy of Brennan Hoffer



Coach Hoffer knows the loss of last spring's season was tough on the senior players.

began to occur. COVID-19 and quarantine created many concerns and worries for student-athletes and parents.

The virus was spreading fast as the spring athletes were just beginning to play their new seasons. When school shut down in mid-March, the spring season came to an early end. Players were left with no sports season to play.

Since COVID hit such an unfortunate time, the senior athletes were unable to play in their final seasons before

they graduated. The boys' tennis team wasn't able to play even one match before the shutdown.

"We were not able to play a

match this season, and the seniors did not get to have a proper send-off," said Coach Ray Sells.

Unlike the boys' tennis team, the girls' tennis team advanced more into their season. They completed two scrimmages before the school closure. Although they had scrimmages, no matches occurred.

"Our team was ready and excited for a successful season," said Coach Kristin

Crowder. "We never even had an official match."

Like both tennis teams, the girls' soccer team was able to play a few scrimmages. Since the team played a short amount of time, new friendships suffered.

"The bonds that the girls normally solidify over the course of the season weren't able to be built on," said Colleen Hirn, varsity coach.

Baseball is another sport that came to a sudden halt. The many seniors on the team didn't get a chance to win one last game of their final season as a Colonial.

"I think it affected the seniors most," said Coach Brennan Hoffer. "Obviously, losing your last year of high school athletics is a tough pill to swallow."

Many athletes and coaches are looking forward to the coming seasons to make up for lost time. Before COVID, there were not many safety and health protocols that

Photo courtesy of Kristin Crowder



The girls' tennis team, coached by Ms. Kristin Crowder and Mrs. Dana Barefoot, started the spring season with excitement while they waited to be introduced at the Spring Sports Pep Rally. When schools closed in mid-March, their season ended after only two scrimmages.

students, athletes and coaches were mandated to follow. For future seasons to happen, new health guidelines will have to be implemented.

"We will follow all CDC regulations and proper protocol to do our best to keep everyone safe," said Coach Crowder.

This year the sports schedules will be different. All winter sports, except

Photo courtesy of Colleen Hirn



The girls' soccer team lost both their season and potential friendships when the spring sports season abruptly ended in March.

basketball and sideline cheer, will start on Dec. 14. Basketball and sideline cheer will begin on Dec. 7.

Fall sports practices will start on Dec. 15; competition cheer and football will start on Dec. 4.

On March 12, spring sports will begin. Tanner Gates, 12, who plays basketball, football and baseball, is excited to play in his final seasons as a senior. Gates is most looking forward to "the competing aspect and spending every day with my best friends."

One last step needs to occur before athletes may officially begin to play. "The governor will need to ease or release COVID restrictions for Return to Play," said Gerald Carsley, activities director.