

# Colonial



# COURIER



Seniors Ella Ackerman and Phillip Page were crowned Homecoming Queen and King during halftime of the varsity football game against Prince George on Oct. 8. The Colonials lost the game 18-38. Photo courtesy of Dr. William Sroufe, CHPS superintendent.

# Colonial COURIER

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# Homecoming traditions continue through compromising; dance and pep rallies canceled for a second year

by Teresa Forehand

Homecoming festivities: Spirit Week, pep rally, football game, king and queen and the big dance. A few of these components were missing this year, but some traditions remained.

Mrs. Elizabeth Roberts, SCA co-sponsor and math teacher, encouraged participation in Homecoming by announcing the Spirit Week's daily themes about a week earlier than she usually does and asking staff to talk it up to the students. She also encouraged her own classes to participate and get their friends to participate, too.

Among the traditions that were carried out this year was the crowning of the king and queen; however, both announcements were made during halftime of the game rather than the announcement of the king at the pep rally as in previous years.

Seniors Phillip Page and Ella

Ackerman were crowned king and queen. They were selected from a smaller than usual homecoming court.

The following students were selected by their respective classes to be class princesses: Lyric Nicholson, 9; Catherine Alderson, 10; and Olivia

boy and girl for king and queen," said Mrs. Roberts. "In the past, we have always crowned the Homecoming King at the Homecoming pep rally instead of the football game."

One custom that has stayed the same over the years is

Photo by Terri Moody



Freshmen participate in Spirit Day as a fun way to bring out their creativity while also representing our school: Hazel Bittenbender, Piper Howison, Elexis Aldridge, Kayla Buffalow, Madison McNulty and Cadence Martin

Harrison, 11.

"This is different from 2019 and the years prior because, traditionally, each club in the school nominates a senior

that the art department created posters for each candidate to hold while riding around in the golf cart before the Homecoming football

game.

The students were required to follow all COVID guidelines and the school's dress code when they dressed up for Spirit Week.

This year Mrs. Roberts just wanted the students to get involved and have fun. She also hoped to provide some sense of normalcy and tradition for the seniors.

"I always have loved going to the Homecoming Dance because every year we've had

it, it has always been a lot of fun," said Page.

Mason Bennett, 12, Homecoming King nominee, believes students should make the most of the week's festivities.

"Spirit Week is all about what you make of it," said Bennett. "If you want to be lame and want to not participate, then that is exactly how Spirit Week is going to go."

Gavin Dalton, 12,

Homecoming King nominee, agreed that participation increases the fun of Spirit Week.

"Two of my favorite events are the pep rally and the Homecoming football game," said Dalton. "The pep rallies, even though they are short, can be a ton of fun and the reveal of the kings and queens at the football game during halftime can be exciting."

Because there were no pep rallies this year, the experience of Homecoming was very different from previous years.

"I think Spirit Week went very well," said Mrs. Roberts. "While student participation wasn't back to pre-COVID levels, it was definitely up from last year. And staff participation is always great! I am looking forward to a time when we can get back to normal and have a pep rally and have the classes compete for most-spirited."

Photo courtesy of Rylei Buck



Underclassmen Kaelie Richey, 9, Megan Rosenberg, 10, and Rylei Buck, 10, show their school spirit by dressing up as children for Generation Day during Spirit Week.



# Homecoming Spirit Week

Photo by Terri Moody



Left to right: Ashlyn Smith, Jenny Yang, Phillip Page, Heather Colletti



Photo by Terri Moody



Left to right: Ms. Braden Johnson, Mrs. Rachel Whitehurst

Photo by Sarah Crinkley



Back row: Trent Kirchoff, Jenny Yang, Jazelle Flores, Marissa Spence, James Jang

Front row: Ashlyn Smith, Heather Colletti

Photo by Terri Moody



Left to right: Nicolas Colletti, Madeline McNulty, Elexis Aldridge, Kayla Buffalow, Piper Howison, Hazel Bittenbender

Photo by Tabitha Strickler



Left to right: Phillip Page, Michaela Wells, Trent Kirchoff, Ashlyn Smith, Heather Colletti, Ella Ackerman, Aubrie Kooiker

Photo by Terri Moody



Left to right: Nicolas Colletti, Kayla Buffalow, Elexis Aldridge, Piper Howison

# Policies, procedures adapt to COVID guidelines

by Gianna Harner

School lives will never be the same. Due to COVID-19, protocol and policy changes CHHS has taken over the past year have varied.

photo by Terri Moody



Since students have been back in person, masks are required and desks are three feet apart from each other, a change from last year when they had to be six feet apart. Sophomore Cohen Mitchell takes advantage of using his cell phone in between classes, a policy that is new this year.

“The changes have not always been easy, and the changes at times have been hard for students, parents, teachers and school staff members at all levels,” said Mr. James Burnett, assistant principal.

Precautions being taken in CHHS due to COVID-19 have varied all the way from having to skip a seat at lunch to staying masked unless students and staff are outside and socially distancing.

In the cafeteria, lunch blocks increased from three to four, and students skip seats to stay distanced and to help avoid as much spread and quarantine as possible in the event of a positive COVID case.

The pandemic has caused the school to go on the second year with no Homecoming Dance.

“I have been looking forward to Homecoming even before school started, and the fact that our school can not have a dance due to COVID makes me beyond upset,” said Kadence Scott, 10. “I feel like it is not even a normal school year anymore.”

This year the health recommendations have gone from six feet between desks to three feet. Temperature checks in the morning have stopped, and P.E. teachers have more flexibility with what they can and can't do.

Outside learning has caught the attention of some students. There are tables set up outside



where teachers can take their students to go outside to learn

photo by Terri Moody



**As opposed to last year, students are now able to walk in any direction in the hallways. Isabella Sierra, 9, complies with the indoor mask mandate.**

and get a bit of fresh air. When learning outside, students are able to take their masks off as long as they are still cautious and social distancing.

The protocols from last year versus this year have changed. During the 2020-21 school year, in the hallways the students were only allowed to walk a certain way, and if they passed their classrooms in the hallways, they had to circle back around. This year, as of now, that rule is not in place.

The 2020-21 school year offered an all virtual learning

option while still offering in-person learning. Virtual learning this year is not an option unless the student has a medical exemption and takes all classes through Virtual Virginia.

If students are out sick, they're unable to join a class Google Meet from home unless they test positive for COVID or need to quarantine.

Sydney Catron, 10, started her freshman year virtually and then chose to return to in-person learning.

"Starting off my freshman year virtually because of COVID took a bad toll on me due to me not being able to focus unless I'm being taught in a classroom, so, of course, my grades dropped tremendously until I came back in person," said Catron.

Mrs. Kate Garrett, World History 1 teacher, also saw many differences in in-person and virtual learning. Mrs. Garrett taught all virtual classes last year.

"Virtual is completely different from in-person learning. I had to implement a lot of programs that would allow for the students to be engaged and for

me to see how much they were participating," said Mrs. Garrett. "Not having the control over what students were doing on the other side of the computer was very different from what you were used to in the classroom."

As of now, due to COVID, the traditional paper and pencil way of learning has been put aside while CHHS embraces digital learning.

"It is so nice for our students to have the bulk of their resources at their fingertips," said Mr. Burnett. "The resources are also conveniently located in one place so the hope is for our students to also be more organized with the Chromebook."

There have been many changes throughout CHHS in the past two years due to COVID, and there may still be more to come.

"The positive is that our students and parents have been trusting, resilient, and have been great at adapting with the ever-changing landscape of school right now," said Mr. Burnett.

# New Faculty and Staff

Mrs. Carol Krupp, Tech Center  
Tardy Station Attendant

"Even though I'm not in a  
classroom, I'm happy to see  
students back in school."

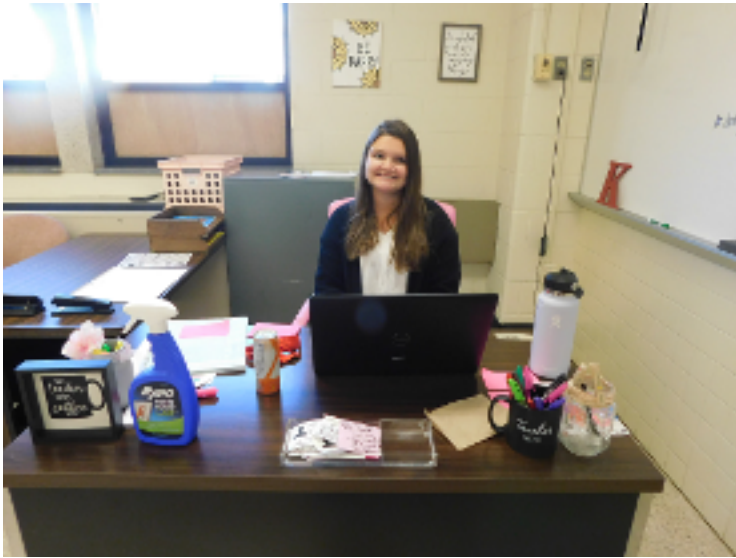
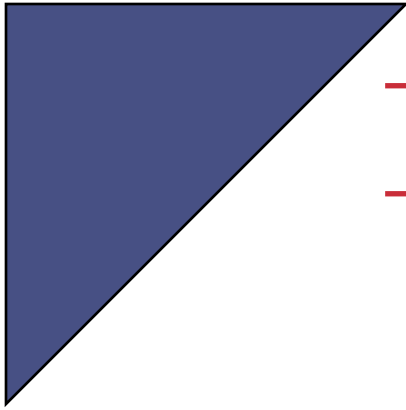


Ms. Braden Johnson,  
English 12 Teacher

"I never would have guessed when I  
was a student that I would end up  
back here as a teacher just a few  
years later, but I'm excited to be  
here, and I'm looking forward to a  
great school year!"







Ms. Kenna Rush,  
World History 2 Teacher  
"I hope my students learn that I am someone they can trust and reach out to whenever they need help."



Madame Stephanie Yon,  
French Teacher  
"I hope my students will know that they can come to me if they need help or someone to talk to. I also hope that by the end of each semester, they'll feel more familiar with French culture."



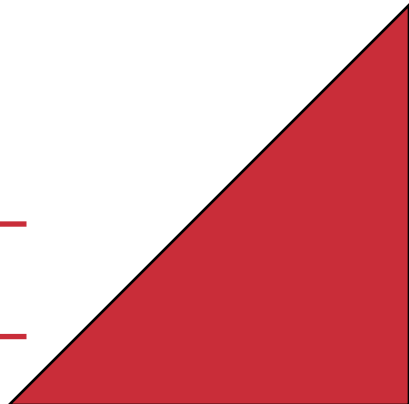


Ms. Caroline Taylor,  
Algebra 1 Teacher

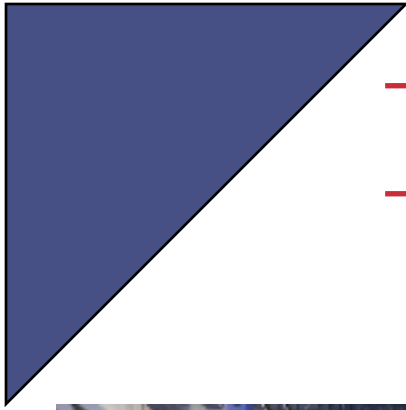
"I hope they learn life skills. For example, I want them to work together while sharing ideas and solutions. They'll be comfortable discussing theirs and other's mistakes."

Ms. Haley Branin,  
English 9 Teacher

"I hope that I can demonstrate an attitude of perseverance as well as a love for learning and inspire my students to do the same!"







Mr. Justin Keeler,  
 Weight Training Teacher  
 "[I hope] to have a positive attitude in whatever you choose to do and that in order to be successful, you have to sacrifice your personal wants for the good of the team."

Mr. Jacob Crowder,  
 Finance Teacher  
 "Being around Colonial Heights High School for my entire life, as well as acting in place of teachers as a substitute, inspired me to look for a career in teaching."



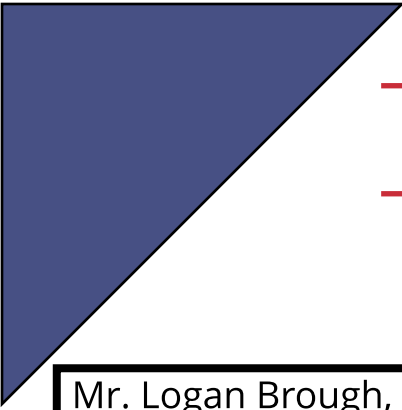


Ms. Kindall Stevenson,  
English 10 Teacher  
"I hope my students are inspired to care about issues of social justice and current events."

Officer Derek Pattison,  
Attendance Officer  
"I was the CHHS School Resource Officer and currently work as a police officer for Richard Bland College as well as Colonial Heights."







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Mr. Logan Brough, Paraprofessional  
"I love working with new people and interacting with others so feel free to say 'hi' while crossing the street!"



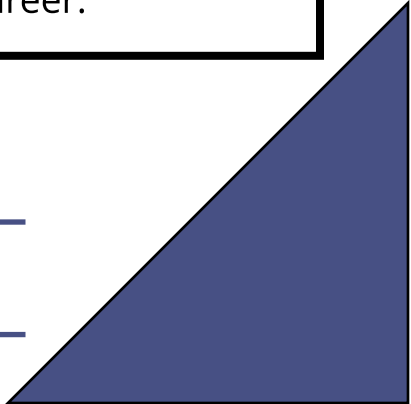
Mr. Timothy James,  
SPED Teacher  
"My grandmother was a teacher which inspired me to become a teacher for my second career."

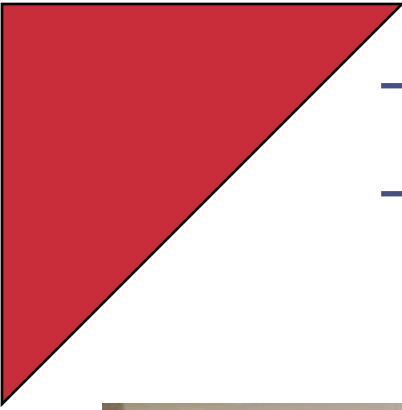
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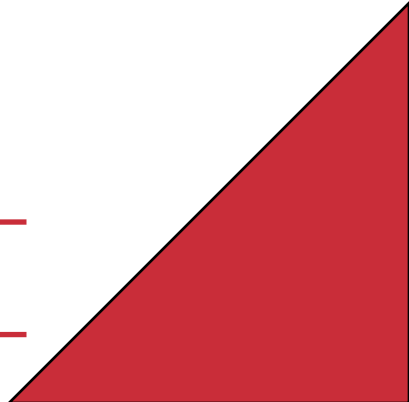


Mrs. Emilie Merrill,  
English 10 Teacher

"I had a lot of teachers that really inspired me when I was younger. I wanted to be able to do that for students as well."

Chef Chris Booth,  
Culinary Arts Teacher

"I have been a tenured chef for some time and have always gravitated towards leadership roles."



# Yang grateful for September SOM recognition

by Catherine Alderson

"I felt a wave of joy and gratitude when I found out I was Senior of the Month," said Jenny Yang, September Senior of the Month.

"One morning in August, Mrs. Janssen had called me from school and told me to meet her in her office the next morning," said Yang, "I met her in her office, where she told me the exciting news."

Yang has been very involved with sports and clubs throughout her years of high school. She's the vice president of National Honor Society, Science National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta and the treasurer of Interact Club. She is also a member of National English Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, Key Club, JOI Club and Art Club. Along with these clubs, she is a CHHS Ambassador and a player on the varsity girls' tennis team.

"Jenny is a quiet and dedicated tennis player," said Ms. Kristin Crowder, gifted

resource teacher and former varsity girls' tennis coach. "The way she approaches the ball is very calculating, but it appears that she isn't even trying - it appears almost effortless."

"Jenny exemplifies the

qualities that all individuals should strive for," said Mrs. Dana Barefoot, chemistry teacher and former varsity girls' tennis coach. "Jenny is the same person on and off the tennis court."

Both Ms. Crowder and Mrs.

Photo courtesy of Jenny Yang



Yang's aspirations will take her to either UVA or NYU to study science and business.



Barefoot reminisced about when they would get a kick out of watching Yang make funny Tik Tok videos with the other girls on the team.

hopes to be passionately pursuing a career.

“I hope Jenny pursues what she loves,” said Mrs. Kathleen White, Power Research

Yang stays very involved and still maintains her grades. In her free time she likes to draw, paint, read, watch movies, volunteer, play tennis and travel.

Photo Courtesy of Jenny Yang



Yang's teachers and coaches are very fond of her devoted and passionate personality, both in school and on the tennis courts.

After high school, Yang wants to go to either UVA or NYU where she plans on studying science and business. In the future, she

teacher. “She is the type of person who will excel at whatever she chooses to do. Most of all, I want to see her happy.”

“I try to manage my time well and pay attention in class,” said Yang.

Ms. Tabitha Strickler, AP English teacher, appreciates many of Yang's attributes.

“Jenny's love for learning and love for others is evident every day,” said Ms. Tabitha Strickler, AP English teacher. “She is hardworking and compassionate, emerging as a leader in and out of the classroom.”

Yang finds motivation through the people in her life.

“The dream to make an impact on the world and to live a good life with my family motivates me to succeed,” said Yang. “My family, teachers and myself are also main contributors to my motivation to succeed.”

# Kirchoff 'shocked' when recognized as October SOM

by Conner Tweed

"When I was first told I was shocked," said Trent Kirchoff about when he found out he was October Senior of the Month. "I could not believe that I was being awarded with this, when I know, and can list, so many other amazing seniors who deserve this as well."

Kirchoff has been an active participant in theater, taught by Ms. Natalie Fehlner, theater teacher.

"It has impacted my life greatly," said Kirchoff. "Ms. Fehlner is one of the greatest people ever, and she helps prepare us for not only the right now, but also for later on in our life."

"She has taught me many meaningful lessons and skills through theater that I will use throughout my life," said Kirchoff.

Ms. Fehlner appreciates having Kirchoff in class.

"Trent is wonderful to have in class because he is so respectful and always on

task," said Ms. Fehlner. "He is also an incredibly talented actor."

Kirchoff has also taken on

subjects, chemistry, is taught by one of his favorite teachers, Mrs. Dana Barefoot.

"Mrs. Barefoot has instilled messages of kindness and

Photo courtesy of Trent Kirchoff



Many teachers, including Mrs. Dana Barefoot and Ms. Natalie Fehlner, believe Kirchoff makes positive contributions to their classes. He hopes to continue his education at UVA, CNU or JMU.

some leadership roles. He is currently the president of the Colonial Players Drama Club as well as the vice president of the International Thespian Society.

One of Kirchoff's favorite

the love for chemistry into me," said Kirchoff.

Likewise, Mrs. Barefoot loves having him in her classroom.

"He is the type of person

that makes everyone feel comfortable in the classroom," said Mrs. Barefoot. "He is a gifted science student and is always willing to help others understand content that is difficult. His interpersonal

school has been time management. Having to complete homework or a project and study for a quiz or test along with his participation in extracurricular activities can be a lot to keep up with.

improved my time management a lot, and now I can get everything done without compromising a lot of sleep," said Kirchoff.

Kirchoff feels apprehensive about graduating but is very motivated by the people with whom he surrounds himself.

He plans to further his education at UVA, CNU or JMU. While in college, he plans to obtain a bachelor's in science, most likely biology or chemistry, and then go to medical school to study dermatology.

Though this is Kirchoff's last year in high school, he has learned a lot that he can pass down to people coming into high school.

"If I could give advice to freshmen, I would tell them to build great relationships with your teachers," said Kirchoff. "Colonial Heights has some pretty amazing teachers who love to help you and see you succeed. Having these relationships with your teachers can also make you feel more comfortable to ask for help when you need it."

Photo courtesy of Trent Kirchoff



Kirchoff has built many friendships with his classmates throughout his school years. Pictured are seniors Mason Bennett, Xavier Munoz, Phillip Page, Kirchoff and Anna Moore.

skills are incredible. Trent is a joy to have in class."

The biggest challenge Kirchoff has faced in high

Kirchoff has developed his time management skills since freshman year.

"I would now say that I have



# Counseling Office provides guidance during college search

by Madi Cates, Adriana Legette and Madison Marchant

Applying for college can be challenging for students who don't have much information or guidance.

"Some of the biggest challenges students face are writing personal statements and essays, completing scholarship applications, and the financial cost of attending college," said Mrs. Mary Vaughan, college and career specialist.

Writing a personal essay can be a little tricky. Getting a teacher to look over it can be very helpful for proofreading and for just a second opinion.

Another challenge is college tuition. Two helpful resources are FAFSA (Free Application for Student Aid) and scholarships. These are ways that a student can get free

money to cut down the cost of tuition.

Ms. Deona Guy, counselor, believes taking the time to complete the FAFSA is beneficial because of "the possibility of receiving free money to go to college! FAFSA definitely makes a difference!"

"Our GRASP representative, Lisa Herbert, does a phenomenal job working with our students and families," said Ms. Guy. "She is very knowledgeable about the FAFSA process and is able to talk with/work one-on-one with students and their parents/guardians to make sure they are filling out the application correctly and answer any question."

Students can also find information from the counseling office about local scholarships.

"Information about local scholarships can be found on

the school counseling website, as well as under the Class of 2022 module on the School Counseling Canvas page," said Ms. Guy. "Our scholarship table is updated frequently with information about local scholarships, requirements and deadlines."

Choosing a two-year community college over a four-year university is a decision many students face when applying for college.

Making the decision to live on campus or stay at home may be another decision students struggle with.

"I am always looking for ways to help a student/family save money, so I suggest starting at home then make the move after you have adjusted to more independence and established a good routine of study habits with social life," said Mrs. Vaughan.

## Upcoming College Information Sessions

**Randolph-Macon College**  
**October 22 at 1:30 p.m.**

**Hollins University**  
**November 3 at 1:00 p.m.**

**James Madison University**  
**November 4 at 9:10 a.m.**

**If you are interested in attending, contact Mrs. Mary Vaughan.**



## SENIOR CLASS OFFICERS

*President: Camille Adenauer*

*Vice president: Mason  
Bennett*

*Treasurer: Ava Foulkrod*

*Historian: Ella Ackerman*

## JUNIOR CLASS OFFICERS

*President: Grayson  
Burchard*

*Vice president: Keagan  
McNulty*

*Secretary: Jennifer Hersee*

*Co-treasurers: Olivia  
Harrison and Jenna Mason*

*Historian: Jessica Sprouse*

*Class princess: Olivia  
Harrison*

## SOPHOMORE CLASS OFFICERS

*President: Rylei Buck*

*Vice President: Hope Molina*

*Treasurer: Kennedy Saunders*

*Historian: Gavin Jarvis*

*Class Princess: Catherine  
Alderson*

## FRESHMAN CLASS OFFICERS

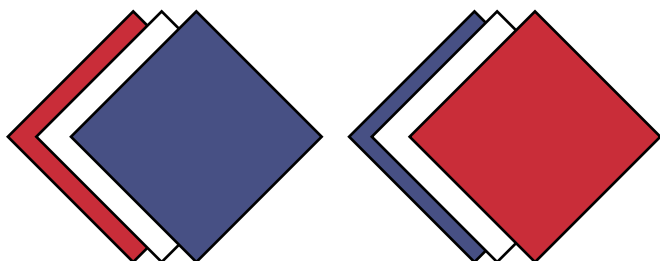
*President: Lyric  
Nicholson*

*Vice President: Madison  
Mingloski*

*Secretary: Jordan  
Grimes*

*Historian: Madeline  
McNulty*

*Class Princess: Lyric  
Nicholson*



# Staff learns yoga, pickleball

by Whitnie Hoyle

“Exercise strengthens both your body and your mind,” said Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal.

With the troubles experienced due to the pandemic, our school hasn't been the same. In these times, very few can say they haven't faced ordeals that stemmed from the effects of COVID-19. As a result, everyone needs a source of mental health awareness to stay sane during these difficult moments.

Students are encouraged to partake in Positive Action provided through the school to aid in mental health. They additionally have the option to participate in sports, clubs and other extra-curriculars to create an outlet for themselves away from the stress of school; however, teachers and staff don't have many options to get away from the stress of their jobs like students do.

Mrs. Janssen wanted to

make a change and provide that outlet for teachers and staff by bringing back what the principal before her introduced.

“A couple of years back the principal before me offered Zumba, running and walking groups to the staff,” said Mrs. Janssen. “It was so much fun. When I became principal, I wanted to continue his idea.”

Once COVID-19 hit, it became close to impossible to continue these activities for staff. Now that everything is starting to go back to normal, the staff personally asked Mrs. Janssen if they could start doing this again.

What is now called the Wellness Initiative is an opportunity for staff to participate in the offered activities of pickleball or yoga after school hours.

Mrs. Dana Barefoot, chemistry teacher, and Ms. Kristin Crowder, gifted resource teacher, formed a pickleball group that has now reached every school in the

division. The staff participates every Wednesday from 2:45-3:45 p.m., in what Mrs. Barefoot calls “Pickleball Wellness Wednesdays.”

The initial idea of introducing pickleball to the staff came from multiple CHHS teachers who had so much fun while playing, that they wanted to share it with their co-workers. Now that this pickleball initiative has spread throughout all schools in the division, monthly competitions among the schools take place.

Photo by Terri Moody



**Mrs. Dana Barefoot coordinates pickleball play on Wednesday afternoons. Any staff member, even those with no prior experience, are welcome to play.**



Pickleball has impacted many of the staff of CHHS and will now impact so much more from this weekly gathering.

teacher. "It's a great way to branch out and meet new friends and bring out a little healthy competition."

While pickleball helps form

family.

"It's a way for my whole family to get together," said Mrs. Johnson. "It's hard when your kids get older to find things that everyone wants to do together."

This initiative is so important to the staff here at CHHS because of its positive effect on their overall well being.

"It is a time to get away from the stress of the day while playing a game that is fun and enjoyable with the benefits of personal wellness," said Mrs. Barefoot. "What more could you ask for?"

Along with pickleball, yoga has also been a huge benefit for our school staff during this time.

Mrs. Darby Wheeler, school counselor, recently became a registered yoga instructor and is providing classes weekly. She is offering a beginning class every other Monday and an intermediate class every other Thursday.

Mrs. Wheeler has practiced yoga for 20 years, but during the pandemic is when

Photo by Terri Moody



Mrs. Lori McDonald prepares to return the serve during a Wednesday afternoon session.

"Pickleball is a great way to get active and be outside, but it also attracts staff from across the school who may not see each other in different circumstances," said Mr. Jacob Crowder, finance

new bonds between co-workers, it also helps some of the staff outside of school. Mrs. Betsy Johnson, counselor, has benefitted from this activity outside of school by playing with her

she realized how impactful yoga was on her health.

"I wanted to introduce yoga to others and give them a space and time to practice that felt safe and familiar," said Mrs. Wheeler.

Mrs. Wheeler realizes that some may feel uncomfortable with the fear of being judged while first trying yoga. She addresses this by talking with them and reassuring them.

She then has them practice common poses to start off and teaches the sun salutation pose. She believes that this method will allow people to feel at ease and come back for more classes.

"I love that Mrs. Wheeler

**Photo by Alyssa Reynolds**



**Ms. Kaylie Melanson prioritizes her mental health by partaking in yoga classes led by Mrs. Darby Wheeler after school.**

has shared her knowledge and skills with our group," said Ms. Nicole Foederer, SPED paraprofessional.

Ms. Foederer, who was

**Photo by Terri Moody**



**While being serenaded by the Marching Colonials during their afternoon practice, Ms. Teresa Fenn and Mr. Ryan Shepperson team up to play a pickleball match against Ms. Braden Johnson and Mr. Jacob Crowder.**

afraid of being embarrassed, summoned up her strength to attend her first class. Mrs. Wheeler made her feel comfortable, which resulted in a rewarding experience.

Ms. Kristina Adams, SPED teacher, has attended yoga classes before, but believes that attending these classes with other staff members provides a more intimate experience.

"We all complain sometimes, but surrounding yourself with positive people and stretching out of your comfort zone to try new

things will help to make life more enjoyable," said Mrs. Wheeler.

Staff members who wish to practice yoga should sign up bi-weekly on Mrs. Wheeler's Canvas course. The yoga sessions take place in the Tech Center's auxiliary gym.



# Dabaeva journeys from Russia for U.S. experience

by Caroline Woodward

Taking chances, undergoing changes, and looking for an adventure are some of the many areas of thoughts that foreign exchange students may experience on their

Elza Dabaeva, 12, a foreign exchange student from Moscow, Russia, came to America in August and was looking forward to seeing what America had to offer.

"I actually waited for this

been to."

Dabaeva's parents were supportive of her decision to study in America.

"My parents, surprisingly, were very happy to send me thousands of miles away from home," said Dabaeva. "My mom was very happy because it was her dream to visit the States, and my dad said that he can't believe that he is sending his daughter to another continent."

Being an exchange student can be tough for some, especially when English is his/her second language. Students may have a difficult time adjusting from their native language to being limited to English only.

According to Mr. Joshua Murkens, a teacher at Carver College and Career Academy in Chester and host parent to Dabaeva, thinks Dabaeva is transitioning effectively from living in Russia to the United States, but sometimes she still struggles with the language barrier between Russian and English.

Photo courtesy of Elza Dabaeva



Dabaeva and her host sister, Claudia, travel to local attractions to experience all that the American culture has to offer.

journey to America. They may have fear of the unknown and worries of what is to come, but they make their way and face the unease to live out the American dream.

journey for two years, but I packed my suitcase 12 hours before my flight," said Dabaeva. "I was pretty excited about everything in the States because it is so different from any other country that I've



"I think she is adapting well!" said Mr. Murkens. "I think her biggest adjustment has been switching from speaking Russian full time to speaking English full time."

Mr. Murkens also traveled the world when he was young; he joined the Peace Corps and lived in South Africa for three years, starting in 2014. He lived with a local family, and they took care of him while he was living in Africa.

"The family took me in and treated me like one of their own children," said Mr. Murkens. "My experience there would have been extremely different without their support."

Years after his experience in Africa, Mr. Murkens and his wife bought their first home in America. They were both interested in helping people from other countries spend time in America because they both spent time in a foreign land.

"We both wanted to provide good experiences for students because we had both lived overseas and knew

how important it is to have a good support system when you take such a big leap," said Mr. Murkens.

Emmanuel Sampson, 12, a friend of Dabaeva's, said that Dabaeva likes to keep to herself, but when she warms up to you, she is always bubbly.

"She's mostly stoic and reserved, but when she speaks of something that interests her, you can see her face light up with enthusiasm," said Sampson. "She's very kind, and easy to get to know."

"When I spoke to her for the first time, she said in a burst of joy, 'I was scared I wouldn't have anyone to talk to,'" said Sampson. "I remembered that feeling from a long time ago, so I thought it was nice to bring her some comfort."

Dabaeva enjoys taking long walks, seeing new places and meeting new people. From living in Moscow to living in Colonial Heights, Dabaeva has needed some time to adjust.

"I'm still trying to adapt to life in a small city," said

Dabaeva.

While living in America for a short few weeks, Dabaeva has learned adapted to American life and culture. She has learned how to speak a new language full time, make new friends, and even adjust to the difference in restaurant portions sizes.

Even though she was nervous about taking the leap of faith by leaving her life behind, Dabaeva is living the life that not only her parents wanted for her, but also the life she wanted for herself.

If Dabaeva could give advice to other students wanting to study abroad, she would recommend not to put so much pressure on themselves and appreciate everything that they acquire when at their dream destination.

"I'm sure that [other foreign exchange students] are doing very well, but I would say don't stress! There will be ups and downs, so we have to be ready to experience a big variety of emotions," said Dabaeva. "It takes time to adjust. Don't be harsh on yourself, and enjoy this year!"

# Mrs. White keeps the pulse on the school's heartbeat

by Tamia Barnes

The media center should be the heartbeat of the school, according to Mrs. Kathleen White, media center specialist and Power Research teacher.

Photo by Madison Marchant



Mrs. White enjoys interacting with students through being the librarian as well as the teacher of the Power Research class.

"I try to create a relaxing, welcoming environment in the library," said Mrs. White. "I want students to feel like they are welcome. You don't have to check out a book to spend time here. Just sit, relax, study or have a conversation with friends."

Even though the library has gone through some changes

through the past couple of years, Mrs. White has managed to continue teaching her Power Research class and will be waiting for the right time to come when

the library will fully open again.

"I got my master's in library science and that helped me understand and appreciate how to research and explore information," said Mrs. White. "Most teachers draw on their past personal experiences to help them teach, and I do the same thing."

Mrs. White lived in Kansas for her entire life until she moved to Virginia 18 years ago. Her husband is retired military; she herself taught in a military junior high school before coming to CHHS.

These experiences have helped Mrs. White teach and find what she loves doing best. Mrs. White enjoys teaching her students to get them all ready for the next chapters in their lives.

The Power Research class was a class that Mrs. White developed eight years ago.

"The purpose behind the class is to help honors students prepare for college," said Mrs. White. "We do this by writing college admission essays and completing college applications. We also cover areas that students might need in college that weren't covered in high school classes."

Many co-workers and staff members enjoy spending their time around Mrs. White.

"I am so lucky to have Mrs.

White as my co-worker and friend," said Mrs. Kate Garrett, World History 1 and U.S/World Affairs teacher.

Photo by Madison Marchant



Mrs. White selects comfortable furniture so that students will feel welcome to hang out and study in the library.

"She means a lot to me as she has helped guide me in so many areas of my life."

Mrs. White supports and encourages the entire school community through her bulletin boards.

"Mrs. White takes particular pride in her bulletin boards in the back hallway," said Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal. "They are themed based and typically have messaging that is pertinent for whatever is going on with us as a school community."

The students in her class enjoy that she always makes them feel welcomed and loved there. Her positive attitude and respect for them

is why their relationship is great.

"Power Research is an amazing class to take if you have room in your senior year, and if you cannot, at least build a relationship with Mrs. White because it is a great relationship to have," said Trent Kirchoff, 12.

Mrs. White chooses to teach her class in the library because she said there is more room to spread out and many resources are available. She started her career as an English teacher, which had given her an idea of how it is inside a classroom.

"Mrs. White is outgoing, supportive and humorous. She shares her wisdom and experience with us, teaching us life lessons along the way," said Jenny Yang, 12. "She truly brings out the best of her students, showcasing and celebrating every individual's uniqueness."

Many staff members are really glad to have Mrs. White helping others and doing her best to commit to this job.

Mrs. Christy Major, AP Government and US/VA

History teacher, appreciates Mrs. White's contributions to the school.

"We are so very lucky to have Mrs. White on our staff!" said Mrs. Major. "She is a rock star."

Mrs. White is grateful that she can share her interests and skills with the students and staff.

"This is a place for students, and I want them to use it. I truly believe that I have the best job in the school," said Mrs. White. "I get to share my love of books with students, and I also get to use my curiosity to help students find information when they need help. What can be better than that?"

Photo by Tamia Barnes



This bulletin board outside of the library, crafted by Mrs. White, inspires students daily.



# Teachers create welcoming environments through decor

by Lena Siegfried and  
Caroline Woodward

School can be a stressful and tense part of a student's day. Students have to wake up extremely early, get ready

students to work diligently.

"Working in a classroom that is decorated makes me feel motivated," said Addison Williams, 10. "It shows that the teacher cares about how

students. They feel that when students are at their best psychologically, they will be more attentive and thrive in the classroom.

"When students can feel comfortable in a space, they can be more successful academically," said Mr. Ellis.

Apart from being beneficial to students, creative and ingenious classrooms also can be favorable to teachers. A teacher's classroom is kind of like a second home, their personal space that they share with their students. When teachers decorate their classroom, this decor can really show who they are personally and gives students a sense of what their character and temperament are like.

"I do like it when teachers put extra effort in because it shows that they want to help students feel welcome and to show their personalities," said Grayson Burchard, 11. "I also think it is important to put a little bit of personal decoration for the teachers,

Photo by Terri Moody



Skyler Allen, 10, Ethan Brekke, 11, and Ariana Crook, 10, play a memory game during Mrs. Laurie Melis's Spanish class. This year all foreign teachers added reading areas with comfortable seating to their classrooms.

for school and are expected to be ready mentally for the school day at 7:35 a.m. Having a good attitude in the morning can really impact how the rest of a student's day will go. Walking into a well decorated and relaxing classroom can motivate

comfortable the students are."

Students can feel more at ease not only physically, but also mentally. Co-teachers Mr. Kevin Ellis and Ms. Jaime Smith always try to make their classroom as comfortable as possible for

Photo by Madison Marchant



Mr. Kevin Ellis and his co-teacher Ms. Jaime Smith take the time to make his classroom a little more exciting for the students.

so that it will give them a sense of individuality.”

The COVID pandemic is a

Photo by Madison Marchant



Many students prefer for their teachers to decorate their classroom because it makes a more personal learning environment. Co-teachers Mr. Kevin Ellis and Ms. Jaime Smith have developed a tropical theme.

major stress factor for both teachers and students. Having a relaxing space can help decompress the teachers and students from issues outside the classroom. Whether it be another class, sports or even personal problems, a comforting classroom can be a secure place for all.

“A lot of kids haven't been here in a year and a half, so hopefully coming to a room that helps them feel welcome makes them comfortable,” said Mrs. Laurie Melis, Spanish teacher.

Mrs. Melis wants to make

her room a cozy area for all students. She has added a new space in her room where students can learn more comfortably.

“Mrs. Melis has her room decorated with comfortable chairs in a corner, which is super cozy and comfortable,” said Williams. “It is a very relaxing place to take a test/quiz.”

When they feel welcome and safe in a classroom, students may listen to the teacher better and relax, especially during a long school day.

“A teacher is more interesting to listen to when they have a positive atmosphere in the classroom,” said Burchard.

# Harris pursues passion of music video editing at a young age

by Hendrix Harris

Whether it be the music you listen to, the TV shows you like, or the videos you watch on YouTube, there is more that goes into entertainment than you think. Whatever source you consume for your entertainment, there is always a person behind the production that puts everything into place.

Dylan Harris, 12, is one of those people. On the surface, he looks like a normal senior in high school, but he might have worked with your favorite rapper. Harris is an editor who specializes in the production of music videos.

"I got into video editing when I was 14 years old, making YouTube videos of myself playing video games," said Harris. "As I grew older, I lost interest in video games and uploading content, but still kept my talent for video editing. A few years later, I started utilizing my gift for editing music videos for rappers and musicians."

Harris is only 17 years old, and while there may be many nights where he gets to bed very late, producing and editing music videos is something he is very passionate about.

The main industries he is involved in are rap and R&B. In the past, he has worked with plenty of big titles in the

music industry, Tory Lanez and Bryson Tiller being the most notable. Hoping to one day be an artist just like them, he looks up to the people he works with.

"Tory Lanez is someone I've always looked up to musically," said Harris. "All of his songs are amazing, and while I do love what I do, I

Photo by Hendrix Harris



Special opportunities have opened up for Harris through his music video editing career.



hope to one day reach the point where I am the one in front of the camera.”

A typical day for Harris involves many hours of editing with little sleep.

“It’s great,” said Harris. “I meet a lot of new people through each new project, and I always love to have something to do.”

“However, there are cons,” said Harris. “Some days I end up going to bed really late, and I have to wake up early to drive to school.”

Harris has also noted that while getting to work with idols is rewarding, there are plenty of downsides to take into consideration as well.

“Rappers will give you creative freedom but don’t tell you specifics,” said Harris. “If you send in your product and they don’t like it, you will have to redo a lot of the same things over and over again.”

While there are plenty of obstacles Harris has to overcome, watching his old videos and realizing how he can do better always motivates him to keep going.

Working in the entertainment industry has always been something that Harris has been passionate about.

“Sometime in the future, I might want to be an actor or a musician,” said Harris.

Harris’s journey across video production has ended up being very rewarding for him. Not only has he made money, but also other opportunities have opened up for him as well.

In addition to editing, Harris has been offered the chance to direct music videos from different companies and production agencies; however, Harris has chosen to stay an editor and play the role he knows he’s good at.

“I don’t like being on set because sometimes it can get a little crazy,” said Harris.

## Ways to Get involved in the Arts

### Classes:

- Theater
- Chorus
- Piano
- Drama
- Art
- Concert Band
- Symphonic Band
- Percussion Band

### Activities:

- Color Guard
- Art Club
- Drama Club
- Marching Band
- Colonial Singers
- Theater Productions
- Madrigals
- National Art Honors Society
- International Thespian Society

# Breast cancer: the search for a cure continues

by Caroline Woodward

The month of October is just an ordinary month for

Photo by Terri Moody



In October 2020, Ms. Melissa Lewis participated in Pink-Out Day, which is an annual spirit day for students and staff that celebrates the survivors of breast cancer and the people battling it currently.

some, but for others it is a very important time of the year. October is National

Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which celebrates the survivors of breast

cancer and brings awareness to all about the facts of this agonizing and

severe disease and its preventions and treatments.

Many people celebrate the survivors of breast cancer but don't really know what breast cancer actually is and how it can be found. According to [nationalbreastcancer.org](http://nationalbreastcancer.org), breast cancer is the formation of abnormal cells that grow into the healthy groups of cells in the breasts. The cancer starts as cells in the breast or breasts and then spreads to other tissues that can potentially disperse throughout the body.

For more severe cases, the cancer can spread to other parts of the human anatomy, including the brain, lungs, liver and even the bones, which can make the cancer more difficult to treat.

In the United States, one out of eight women will be diagnosed with breast

cancer within her lifespan. Although women are more at risk for developing breast cancer because of the difference in breast tissue, men can also endure this

mammogram at least yearly to try to prevent the growth or catch maturing cells of breast cancer early before the cancer becomes invasive.

necessary, depending on the person, their family history and the stage of cancer the individual has. The severity and progression of the cancer can determine the treatment needed. For more serious stages of breast cancer, a mastectomy of one or both breasts may be vital to the women's survival of the malignancy.

Photo courtesy of [www.nationalbreastcancer.org](http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org)



The National Breast Cancer Foundation is an informative website and organization that gives accurate and beneficial information about breast cancer.

type of cancer.

Though men can develop breast cancer, it is very rare. In 2021, according to [nationalbreastcancer.org](http://nationalbreastcancer.org), 2,560 men were diagnosed with breast cancer while 330,840 cases were detected in women. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer that develops in women, second only to skin cancer.

Self examination, mammograms and clinical breast exams can all help to detect breast cancer or potential cancerous cells. All women age 40 and older are encouraged to get a

As of now, there are four stages of breast cancer: stage 0-1, indicating that the cancer was caught early and can be treated with surgical removal of the cells, through stage 4, the most threatening stage. Stage 4 breast cancer used to be very deadly, but with the advancements in new sciences and studies, stage 4 is now more treatable with surgeries, chemotherapy and even radiation therapy.

Although treatment for cancer is a possible outcome needed for cancer patients, it is not always

According to [healthcare.com](http://healthcare.com), the survival rate for women diagnosed with breast cancer is 84 percent.

Scientists, doctors and analysts are researching new studies about the mutation of breast cancer and looking for a cure every day. To donate to a charity or learn more about breast cancer awareness, go to [www.nationalbreastcancer.org](http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org) for more information.





# Opinion: students learn better with Chromebooks

by Madison Marchant

As of last year, walking into a classroom looks a little different than it used to. Instead of students writing down notes, or doing an assignment on paper, students are typing away at their computers.

Since the pandemic hit, students have been forced to use their Chromebooks rather than paper and pencil for most assignments. I believe that Chromebooks are more efficient and cost effective than paper and pencil.

Writing notes out has always been a struggle for me. Typically, it takes me more time, and I was always the person to ask the teacher to go back to the previous slide in the PowerPoint because I wasn't finished writing.

"Humans on average type faster than we write with a pen, which allows for the recording of more information, even verbatim transcripts," according to the McGill Office for Science and

Society website.

I am a person who really struggles with spelling, and I know I'm not the only one. When I am taking notes on my Chromebook, Google fixes my spelling errors for me so I don't have issues in the future when I am studying.

With Chromebooks, I have been able to type my notes out more quickly and efficiently. For me, typing takes significantly less time than writing everything down, and when writing long notes, my hand will start to hurt and cramp up.

Taking quizzes and tests has become easier with the Chromebooks as well. Grading tests and quizzes is significantly easier for teachers now that they only have to focus on short answer questions because of resources, like Canvas, which score multiple choice questions automatically.

Typically, staying organized for teachers is easier when all they have to do is type in

whatever document or assignment they would like to pull up and it shows up. This is unlike using papers that can be easily lost in the shuffle.

"Paper is manual work, meaning the biggest mistake is usually leaving the work at home," according to the Newsday article "Computer vs. paper: Asking students which they prefer to use."

Photo by Teresa Forehand



**In past years, students typically used paper/pencil; now students complete most assignments on Chromebooks.**

Another benefit to using a Chromebook is the decrease in the cost of school supplies. Every school year when I would go back to school shopping, I would have to buy extreme amounts of paper and certain pens and pencils along with binders that the teacher would require. CHHS

provides Chromebooks, cutting down the cost of school supplies.

Overall, I have noticed that using Chromebooks has been

more beneficial for me than using paper and pencil. I believe that we should switch to only using Chromebooks rather than paper and pencil for the benefit of students

and staff. Some may argue that using computers has distractions, like advertisements, but with the right ad blockers, that will not be an issue.

## Opinion: students learn better with paper, pencils

by Madi Cates

Do you remember how it felt to go school supply shopping? Picking out matching binders and colorful pens was always my favorite part of a new school year. Now, I just have to open my Chromebook.

I believe that paper-pencil learning is better than using a Chromebook. I have always retained information better by writing it down.

I think that when I have to focus and take the time to write down notes or write to complete an assignment, I end up understanding the curriculum way better than I would if I were on a Chromebook.

However, I can understand why some people would prefer learning on a Chromebook. They may feel

like they can keep everything organized and in one place. Work is also easier to access on a Chromebook.

I also think that students are more likely to be working on something apart from the curriculum when using Chromebooks because switching tabs on a Chromebook is so easy to do.

According to the Scientific American article "A Learning Secret: Don't Take Notes with a Laptop," in one study with law school students, almost 90 percent of students using laptops engaged in online activities that were unrelated to the classwork for at least five minutes, and around 60 percent were distracted for half the class.

I think that by taking notes by hand, students will be paraphrasing the lecture and, therefore, getting a better

understanding of the topic at hand because they are

Photo by Madi Cates



Some students find it more beneficial to use papers and pencils rather than Chromebooks.

writing their own words that they can interpret.

In my opinion, paper-pencil learning is better than using a Chromebook. Even though a classroom without Chromebooks is now unrealistic, teachers should try to find a healthy balance by using both Chromebook and paper-pencil resources.