

# Colonial



# COURIER

December 2021



Top left: Prior to Unity Day during Positive Action time, students wrote on leaves ways they can promote unity and what they are thankful for. Then, the art department displayed the leaves on an original Unity Tree that is hanging outside of the auditorium. Top right: Students and staff participated in Unity Day by wearing t-shirts on Friday, Dec. 3. Pictured left to right: Nick Sprinkle, Ashton McKenzie, Keagan McNulty and Ryan Ayi-Bamah. Bottom: During Unity Day, students and staff signed a "WE ARE COLONIALS" banner that was later hung outside of the cafeteria. Photos by Madison Cates, Jenna Mason, Terri Moody. Read more about Unity Day on page 2.





Faculty Advisor: Mrs. Terri Miles Moody

**Editors**

Editor-in-Chief:  
Madison Marchant  
Features Editor:  
Caroline Woodward  
News Editor:  
Whitnie Hoyle



**Staff Writers**

Catherine Alderson  
Tamia Barnes  
Madi Cates  
Teresa Forehand  
Gianna Harner  
Hendrix Harris  
Alyssa Reynolds  
Lena Siegfried  
Conner Tweed

# Students, staff celebrate Unity Day

by Madi Cates

"It is important for people in general to acknowledge and accept differences, but also understand that there are common threads that bind us all," said Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal.

CHHS came together for Unity Day on Friday, Dec. 3. Everyone wore matching shirts and the art department made a mural.

"Unity day has been around for over 10 years now," said Mrs. Janssen, "It is typically

Photo by Cassie Damon



Students and staff were gifted t-shirts to wear for Unity Day. Left to right: Hannah Rutledge, Madison Faries, Eliza Chiodo, Nick Sprinkle, Kellie Roche, Ben Sroufe, Keagan McNulty, Brooke Hartman

affiliated with the color orange, and it is all about togetherness and anti-bullying."

Unity Day was started by

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center as a signature event of National Bullying Prevention Month. They chose to wear the color orange because it represents feeling safe.

The art department created a mural of the Unity Day Tree that is displayed outside of the auditorium.

During Positive Action, students wrote what they were grateful for on paper leaves. The art students arranged the leaves on the

Unity Day Tree.

"All of my Art 2/Drawing students helped to create the Unity Tree Painting in some way," said Mrs. Ashley Unger,

art teacher.

Last year, all students and staff received a sticker that said "Kindness starts with you" for Unity Day. This year, everyone received a free t-shirt.

Administrators are planning to celebrate Unity Day again next year.

"I think we will celebrate Unity Day again," said Mr. James Burnett, assistant principal. "I am hoping we can expand on it and do even more activities to pull students together."

Students and staff signed a banner that read "We Are Colonials" and hung it outside of the cafeteria.

"Although we all know right from wrong and how we should treat one another, it never hurts to bring attention to the fact that the way we act, talk and respond influences the culture of our school," said Mrs. Betsy Johnson, counselor. "We want everyone to feel accepted, supported and loved for who they are."

# Mason recognized as Dec. Senior of the Month

by Gianna Harner

“It took me a moment to take everything in, but then I realized what an honor it was and how proud it will make my parents,” said Mason Bennett, December Senior of the Month.

There's no doubt that Bennett is very involved. He is a part of Interact, Key Club and JOI Club. He was inducted into NHS, Beta and Spanish NHS. He has also played volleyball and tennis for CHHS for the past four years.

“I have many memories from sports, just being around the upperclassmen at volleyball there was always something funny happening,” said Bennett. “Even being at sporting events will hold some of my dearest memories.”

Among his many activities, Bennett holds leadership positions. Bennett was elected class vice-president for four years and is currently serving as the president of the JOI Club. He was also captain of the tennis team for

Photo courtesy of Mason Bennett



**Bennett has created some of his most treasured high school memories through his participation in clubs and sports. He plans to continue with some activities next year when he attends a four-year college or university.**

2020-21 season and will remain captain for this upcoming season.

“Get involved,” said Bennett. “I know that's what everyone says, but it really is the best advice I can give.”

“My freshman year of high school, I had Mrs. Moody's English class. She really stressed getting involved with

her classes,” said Bennett. “At first I was kind just like, ‘oh whatever,’ but as clubs started, I decided to take Mrs. Moody's advice and actually join clubs/sports teams. This is one of the greatest lessons and takeaways I have from Mrs. Moody. I am now getting ready to apply the same knowledge



Photo courtesy of Mason Bennett



In the spring Bennett will play his fourth year of varsity tennis and will serve his second year as team captain. As a junior, he played top seed in both singles and doubles. Pictured from left to right, back row to front row: Parker Hanson, Dalton Tharpe, Sam Moore, Brett Foster, Coach Ray Sells, Logan Wilson, Bennett, Dawson Moody

when I go off to college.”

Bennett is in the midst of the college application process.

“I plan to attend a four-year university, and my top two colleges right now are CNU and William and Mary,” said Bennett. He plans to study environmental science.

Bennett has kept a positive attitude all throughout his years in school.

“Mason Bennett has been a positive presence in this school from the time he was a Tussing Tiger,” said Mrs.

Darby Wheeler, counselor. “I remember Mason not only always smiling, but helping.”

Time management started to be a struggle for Bennett due to having to balance school and sports at the same time. Whether Bennett had work to do or not, he took an hour out of his day to do something school work related.

Bennett’s parents have been his greatest motivators. He is grateful for his parents who have supported him unconditionally and

throughout everything he has done in life. His mom has never missed a volleyball game.

“My parents definitely motivate me to succeed,” said Bennett. “I see how much work they put in, whether they know it or not. I am grateful to have two loving parents in my life, who have supported me unconditionally through everything that I have done in my life.”

Bennett has made an impact on the people around him.

“I know, without a doubt, that Mason will spread his light wherever he lands in the future,” said Mrs. Wheeler. “Mason is the kind of kid you root for...he's not the underdog; he's just so darn nice that you want good things to come to him.”

# Holiday joy is sometimes accompanied by holiday depression

by Caroline Woodward

As the end of the year is approaching, many people are looking forward to the cheerful and comforting holidays and the many festivities that come along with the celebrations. Some people love the holiday atmosphere and the joy that is so prominent in the air during this special time of year. However, not everyone sees Christmas and other winter holidays as “the most wonderful time of the year.” For some individuals, the holidays are a time that can be the most dreadful.

Many factors can influence the dreary moods of people during the holidays, including financial difficulties, loneliness, grief and excessive isolation. All of these factors can contribute to “holiday blues,” better known as holiday depression.

Although it doesn't fit the holiday stereotype, holiday depression is a real and serious topic that can affect many people's overall health, especially mental health.

According to Healthline.com, social isolation is the most dominant issue that contributes to ongoing depression, which is very common around the winter holidays.

with their loved ones during this special time of year; this isolation can alter a person into a state of depression because of loneliness. Whether it be that a person that is military and can not make it home in time for the holidays, the grief of a recent death of a family member or just not having family at all to spend time with can all be disheartening impediments that are experienced by many every year.

“I think the Christmas holidays can be especially hard on people,” said Mrs. Betsy Johnson, counselor. “It may be that this time of year reminds them of loved ones who have passed, and they remember special times with them.”

Financial issues can also sway different feelings about the holidays. Some people may still be trying to recover from the monetary hurdles from the pandemic. Buying the right presents for family and friends can be an ultimate stressor.

“Sometimes we are sad

**HOW TO DEAL WITH HOLIDAY DEPRESSION & ANXIETY**

The holidays are full of joy and celebration -- except when they aren't. If you are in a season of depression, grief, or sadness, here are ways to cope.

- Create a Holiday Plan.** This year's holiday season might not be easy, but having plans in place for those tough moments will make a difference in your anxiety level.
- Change Things Up.** Break away from the usual traditions and try something new this year. Go to the movies or head out for an overnight get-away.
- Don't Expect the Worst.** Many people are surprised to discover the holidays are not as bad as they think. Sometimes the anticipation is worse than the actual event.
- Keep Routines.** Stick to your routines as much as possible. Structure and consistency reduce stress levels and help with sleep and motivation.
- Let People In.** When we are feeling sad or depressed, the temptation is to withdraw. Allow people into your life. Even if it's not perfect, connect with family and friends.

*The Holy Mess*  
More info and resources at [www.theholymess.com](http://www.theholymess.com)

Being with friends, family and other loved ones is one of the most popular highlights of the holiday season. However, not all people are always able to be

because we can't afford to buy gifts for everyone on our list, and we need to stop and remember that the holidays are about being with people you care about," said Mrs. Darby Wheeler, counselor. "A heartfelt letter or card, a tin of cookies or a craft that you have made means more to most people than something that is bought."

Any kind of depression can make a person feel less motivated, tired and less willing to complete simple life tasks, but there may be ways to kick depression to the curb and get back to feeling more themselves. Many strategies

and mechanisms, including meditation, going outdoors and self-care, may help people cope with depression and extreme sadness.

"If someone is feeling down and they think it may be mild depression, it is good to find outlets to occupy their mind," said Mrs. Johnson. "Things like exercise, art, crafts, reading, playing with pets, spending time with others, and shopping may help to lift a person's mood."

Depending on the severity of depression that an individual is feeling, the help of a medical professional may

be useful and even necessary to overcome the long-term struggles that a person might be feeling.

"My advice would be to talk about it," said Mrs. Wheeler. "Find someone you can trust, family, friends, or a therapist, and share with them how you are feeling. If you've felt depressed for a long time, a visit to your doctor could be a good decision."

Anyone feeling depressed and looking for additional support and advice can visit [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov) or call 1-800-662-HELP.

**For additional help, advice, or support visit  
[www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org) or call the National Suicide  
Hotline at 800-273-8255.**



**USAC  
Lifeline Support**

# Trade schools prepare students for work force

by Conner Tweed

Trade schools, also known as vocational schools, are post-secondary educational institutions that graduates may attend after high school.

Trade schools primarily consist of students just out of high school, though there are many adults who enroll in a trade school wishing to transition jobs.

Applicants are required to have a high school diploma or GED to attend. Some trade schools do have additional admission requirements. These can include a copy of transcripts, certifications from skill-based programs or the ability to pass a proficiency exam.

People looking to be admitted into a trade school typically are looking to expand on their manual, mechanical or technical skills. These could include jobs like plumbing, construction, cosmetology, automotive tech or electrician technology.

A student in a trade school will only take courses related

to the trade they are there for: no other classes are required apart from the ones required to learn a specific trade.

“Unlike colleges and universities, at a trade school you do not have to take general education classes but will take courses that are related to the trade you are pursuing,” said Mrs. Mary Vaughan, college and career advisor.

Trade schools focus primarily on developing the students' technical abilities in skilled and mechanical trades; this is in order to prepare students for a job in their skilled trade.

One advantage to attending a trade school instead of a traditional college is the cost.

“Most of the trade schools do accept FAFSA, and this can help a student to pay for their education,” said Mrs. Vaughan.

More benefits to attending a trade school include smaller classes, similarly interested peers, hands-on training and

job experience.

With everything though, there are a few disadvantages, as well, which could potentially include less financial aid than a student attending a traditional college; a potentially rigorous schedule, including fewer breaks; and less adaptability due to a smaller range of courses.

The schedules at trade schools can be very complicated, considering there are students who may be older, wishing to learn a new skill or even transition their career.

Trade schools are typically two-year programs that offer flexible schedules, but may include fewer breaks. This schedule is to help assist students attending that also might have to work a job or take care of their family.

For more information on trade schools, visit this website:

[Accreditedschoolsonline.org/vocational-trade-school/virginia/](https://Accreditedschoolsonline.org/vocational-trade-school/virginia/)



# Sow Good Seeds club executes random acts of kindness

by Whitnie Hoyle

When there are countless negative aspects of the world, it's sometimes difficult to see the positive ones. Mrs. Lolita Smith, lead custodian, has made this possible by creating the Sow Good Seeds Club.

The Sow Good Seeds Club is a brand new club that gathers together to execute random acts of kindness for the community.

"I have friends who are very positive, compassionate and caring of others, and so we came together to spread love to others," said Mrs. Lolita Smith. "I have had a passion to do something like this for some time."

One of the most important aspects of creating this club was finding the right people to take part.

"Lolita Smith invited me to join, and I think Lolita is one of the sweetest people I know!" said Ms. Jaime Smith, math/SPED teacher. "I know that she wants to make a

difference and influence people in a positive way, and I am excited to have the opportunity to do this with her."

Several staff members of CHHS attend this club;

club as well," said Ms. Kristina Adams, SPED teacher. "He has Autism, and I like when he is able to make a difference in other people's lives despite his challenges."

Even though this club is still

Photo courtesy of Lolita Smith



The Sow Good Seeds Club members gather to brainstorm ideas to help the community.

Left to right: Kristina Adams, Melissa Lewis, Kim Massenburg, Lolita Smith, Rosie Carter, Ruby Tucker, Tammy Tatum Jackson, Tony Adams.

however, it is also open to outside members.

"My brother has joined the

new, the members have already been affected by its positivity.

“Being involved with something that I enjoy doing and that brings joy to others helps affect my daily life in a positive way,” said Ms. Jaime Smith.

This club has immeasurable benefits for both the members and citizens affected by the club.

Adams are two of my best friends here at CHHS!” said Ms. Jaime Smith.

While the club members are also helping to better themselves by volunteering, the main idea is to help others. The members have already started up activities to help others in need.

The mission of Sow Good Seeds Club is to serve others and give help where it is needed. Even giving compliments is a huge way of spreading kindness to others, which is the goal of this club.

“Sometimes all it takes is a small gesture to brighten someone’s mood or to make them feel loved,” said Ms. Jaime Smith. “Doing what you can to be kind to others is important. These small acts can make our community a better place.”

If it weren’t for Mrs. Lolita Smith, this club wouldn’t have been started.

“Sowing seeds of love to others along with other groups throughout our community doing the same things: together just a little seed of love can make a big difference,” said Mrs. Lolita Smith.

Photo courtesy of Lolita Smith



The Sow Good Seeds Club members spend quality time volunteering while serving the Colonial Heights community.

Left to right: Lolita Smith, Kristina Adams, Jaime Smith, Kim Massenburb, Tony Adams

Ms. Jaime Smith finds “joy from helping others, and also from spending time with my friends.”

“Lolita Smith and Kristina

“We are currently in the process of putting together bags with essential items for people who do not have a home,” said Ms. Adams.



# Christmas in Germany differs from in the U.S.

by Lena Siegfried

Christmas is the happiest time of the year, at least for most people: the snow, the joy, the lights, the decorations, the family coming together, cozy

before Christmas. The city employees start to decorate the whole city in early November with lights and a huge Christmas tree and sometimes even music boxes.

Germany does not

Germany and experienced in her childhood a typical German Christmas.

“Children put their shoes outside their door the evening before Nikolaustag on Dec. 6,” said Ms. Smith. “St. Nikolaus brings a small treat to well behaved children or a switch to those that have been naughty.”

In December the tradition “Weihnachtsmarkt” starts. This street market is associated with the celebration of Christmas during the four weeks of Advent. Participants drink “gluhwein” and eat candied almonds at this social event.

On Dec. 24 many people go to church and see the “Grippenspiel,” which is played by elementary school kids and shows the story of Adam and Ava.

“Every Christmas we make meat fondue with potato salad,” said Ms. Smith. When the family is done eating, everybody, except the children, goes to the

Photo courtesy of Lena Siegfried



Throughout the Christmas season, some German families have a tradition to go to the Christmas market, which sells food and Christmas decorations.

Left to right: Conny Siegfried, Mateo Siegfried, Waltraud Siegfried, Lena Siegfried, Udo Siegfried

sweaters and Christmas Eve itself. Christmas is a unique holiday because in many countries, or even areas, the winter holiday is celebrated differently.

In Germany, preparations and celebrations begin way

celebrate Thanksgiving, which means the whole month of November is nothing but a great decorated city. Since there is no Thanksgiving, “Nikolaustag” is a big event.

Ms. Martina Smith, paraprofessional, grew up in



Christmas tree and the “Christkind” brings the presents.

“My mother would ring a little bell letting my brother and I know that the

‘Christkind’ or ‘Christ Child’ left the presents under the Christmas tree,” said Ms. Smith. “We would come running from another room to see the presents under the

colorful lit tree.”

The next two following days, Germans usually go out for dinner and visit the mother’s and the father’s sides of the family.

Photo courtesy of Metropole Ruhr Tourismus



In the beginning of November, city employees decorate the entire city with festive, Christmas lights.

## More Winter Holidays

Hanukkah - November 6 - December 6

St. Nicholas Day - December 6

St. Lucia's Day - December 13

Winter Solstice - December 21

Kwanzaa - December 26 - January 1

Boxing Day - December 26

New Year's Eve - December 31



# Nursing students gain skills, experience; explore potential careers in medical field

by Teresa Forehand

Nursing courses -- Introduction to Nursing and Basic Nursing -- give students an overview of nursing responsibilities, healthcare and careers. The focuses of the nursing program are on the basics of patient care and fundamental nursing skills.

A nursing course also prepares students for more advanced topics in particular areas. According to Mrs. JoAnn Moody-Parham, nursing teacher, nursing revolves around four main components: health promotion, disease prevention, risk reduction and health restoration.

Some nursing students graduate with an idea of what their lives as a nurse will be and what it means to go out into the real world and actually have to save lives; however, to have the opportunity to potentially take on the worst day of someone's life and make it better is a main goal many

nursing students reach for.

Some students who

the life lessons, but also for the enjoyment of the class.

Photo by Caroline Woodward



**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used to protect medical officials from pathogens and other infections that may reside or invade a patient. PPE can include gloves, gowns, face masks and face shields. David Taber, 12, and Olivia Harrison, 11, practice wearing their PPE during class.**

participate in the nursing program have a history of family members, friends or loved ones who have been helped by doctors and nurses. Many participants highly recommend taking nursing courses not only for

Students participate in many hands-on activities, like serving at health care facilities, First Aid/CPR training and learning the Heimlich maneuver while in the nursing program.





The nursing courses provide education to assist students to become more empathetic toward patients in their care. David Taber, 12, and Olivia Harrison, 11, practice delivering a meal to a mannequin.

"I would encourage others to take nursing because it gives you a lot of information on how to care for people, you learn more about how your own body works, and just having some knowledge of nursing can help someone tremendously in an

emergency," said Kailey Gress, 12.

Mrs. Moody-Parham, has been in nursing for more than 20 years, working in the Tri-Cities and in Richmond.

"Teaching is an opportunity to inspire others to grow the

field of nursing," said Mrs. Moody-Parham.

Kassidy Campbell, 12, is a nursing student. One of her favorite aspects of the program is learning how amazing the human body can be.

"Mrs. Moody is an excellent teacher and has taught us all so much already," said Campbell. "I haven't experienced the feeling of saving a life yet, but I know when I do, I'll be on cloud nine."

Nursing student Sarah Webb, 12, appreciates both the interpersonal and medical skills that she is gaining as a nursing student.

"Some of my favorite things about nursing are the skills and relationships," said Webb. "Being in nursing means you really have to be able to work together with your classmates, and, personally, I love the medical field so getting to do our skills really interests me."



# Juniors power through their most rigorous year

by Alyssa Reynolds

A year when life changing decisions are made and the reality of adult life starts to set in, junior year is often seen as the hardest year out of all the years of schooling.

"There is definitely the perception that junior year is the hardest," said Mrs. Amanda Creasey, English 11 teacher. "That perception was even around when I was in high school. I think what probably leads to that feeling is that junior year is a reality check."

This year of high school has been dreaded and stressed about by students for countless numbers of years. On top of everything as well, COVID has been around, making not only students' lives but also teachers' lives harder.

"I felt like I had to be extra cautious after seeing how many people just didn't care about the people around them," said Meenakshi Jha, 12, about the 2020-21 school year.

Junior year can be described as "quick, whirlwind, overwhelming," said Jha.

Students like Gavin Shelton, 11, not only have a workload in their classes but also with their school activities. Shelton participates in band when he is not doing school work.

"It is definitely filled with more work than previous years, but it is not as difficult as they say it is," said Shelton, Marching Colonials drum major. "I have learned to balance my work and social lives."

This large workload can affect the social lives of students, and some are still adjusting to coming back to in-person classes after almost two years of having only online classes. The new environment was difficult for teachers and students to adjust to.

"Half the students in person and half virtually and not being able to use paper ever was really hard for me as a

math teacher," said Ms. Cassie Damon, math teacher, "but this year has been a lot better, I think!"

Students and teachers suggest that upcoming and current juniors develop study habits, pay attention and complete assignments on time. These few simple steps will make junior year less rigorous and not as challenging as it is rumored to be.

"Put your phone away during class," said Mrs. Creasey. "It's taking your attention away from the present moment, as well as from information that you will probably need to succeed in the class."

Junior year can be described as demanding, exhausting and stressful, but it definitely is not impossible.

"I get why people say that, but I believe if you manage your time wisely, it won't be as bad as some people may think." said Jessica Sprouse, 11.

# What is your favorite Christmas movie?



Mrs. Katherine Rudolph: "'The Santa Clause' is my favorite because I remember watching it as a kid, and it's been my favorite forever."



Ms. Kaylie Melanson: "Every year with my family, I watch 'Elf.' I think I can quote the entire movie."



Mrs. Samantha Smith: "I really like 'Elf,' but I also like 'Christmas with the Kranks' because the daughter goes to Peru and brings home her Peruvian boyfriend. My husband and I always watch it together while we wrap presents."

# What is your favorite Christmas movie?



Cartier Coleman, 9: "My favorite Christmas movie is 'Home Alone' because it just gets me in the Christmas spirit."



Samantha McKinney, 10: "My favorite Christmas movie is 'The Grinch' because he's beautiful."



Shanae Chavis, 11: "'Home Alone' is very funny and very adventurous, and it shows that kids can be trusted at home."



# What is your favorite Christmas movie?



Tori Morgan, 10: "My favorite Christmas movie is 'Home Alone' because one of the guys is cute."



Edwin Martinez, 12: "I like 'Polar Express' because it's a classic."



Matthew Dube, 10: "I like 'Home Alone' the best because it has funny shenanigans."



Ashton Davis, 11: "My favorite Christmas movie is 'The Nightmare before Christmas.'"