

Colonial



COURIER

March 2023

Photo courtesy of Colonial Heights High School Instagram



Students and teachers joined together to celebrate and support the students participating in spring sports during the spring pep rally, which was held on Friday, March 10. During the pep rally the Tape-A-Teacher fundraiser was brought to life: Mr. Tracy Boyd, biology teacher; Ms. Sarah Crinkley, biology teacher; Mr. Jacob Crowder, finance teacher; and Ms. Grace Hogan, English teacher, were taped to the wall with Duct Tape. The money that was raised from the students will be donated to the Make-A-Wish foundation in the name of Jahnesa Jones, 12.

What's inside? See p. 33 for Ring Dance pictures.

Colonial



COURIER

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Carter dominates boys' wrestling state championship as freshman

by Jenna Mason

Being a student-athlete takes a lot of mental and physical work; for one freshman in particular, he's shown how hard work can achieve even the biggest of goals. Tristan Carter, 9, put in the work and succeeded in reaching his goal of winning the state championship for high school boys' wrestling.

Originally joining wrestling because of his father's interest in it, Carter has been wrestling for 10 years since the age of four. Ever since then, he's loved wrestling and created a passion out of it.

Not only does Carter spend his time practicing wrestling through CHHS, he also attends a private club called Virginia Team Predator in Chester, Va. Throughout school and club wrestling, he's gotten into a routine for his practices.

"Usually at the beginning of practice, we go for our run, do our stretches and then we do like 30 minutes of cardio, just hard cardio," said Carter.

Photo courtesy of Tristan Carter



With school and club wrestling, Carter has a very consistent practice schedule. He wrestles most days for three hours a day.

"Then we get into, like, drilling for an hour, then for like 30 minutes we do, like, live wrestling, as if you were in a match with another person."

When it comes to big matches, Carter doesn't usually tend to have any anxiety. Normally, he gets into his own head and mentally prepares for the match, and on the day of states, he did that exact thing.

"I mean, I felt like today I was gonna' do something and I'm gonna' get my name out there, you know?" said Carter.

With Carter's consistent

practice schedule, he was able to perfect the moves he needed in order to win the state championship.

"It was just like a rush of relief, like I actually did this," said Carter. "It felt amazing; it felt gratifying that I was actually able to do this and that everything was worth it."

Not only was Carter filled with joy, but also Mr. Wade Thayer, wrestling coach, was happy to have his first high school state championship.

"It was exciting," said Coach Thayer. "It was exciting because it's my first state

championship with high school wrestling. I've had youth state champions, but it was exciting to have a state champ in high school."

Carter's teammate, Bayron Hernandez, 12, has been practicing with him for the past three months. During that time, Hernandez knew how much Carter truly deserved his championship.

"When Tristan won states, it was a very nice moment," said Hernandez. "We kinda' knew he was going to take it all the way because for a 106 [weight class], he is very good, but when he won I was so happy and excited for him."

Throughout the season, many of Carter's teammates and his coach have seen him

grow in strength and dexterity.

"He has more patience in his moves; before he tried to rush things and some of them didn't hit as well as they could've," said Coach Thayer. "I think towards the end of the season, he had fine tuned some of those, and he got the patience to execute the moves more precisely."

A teammate of Carter's, Nick Sprinkle, 12, saw how Carter grew in many different ways throughout the winter season.

"Tristan has improved in pretty much every way he could since the beginning of the year," said Sprinkle. "He practices outside of the school team so he has put in lots of work."

Not only has Carter put in the work to win, but while doing so, he has come to practice with a positive attitude and was giving it his all.

"Every day during practice Tristan was giving 100 percent, always being the hardest worker in the room," said Sprinkle.

Photo courtesy of Tristan Carter



Carter's coach and teammates have seen how he has grown throughout the season, especially with his effort. Since the beginning of the season until the end, Carter was always giving 100 percent.

Carter's state championship win has also given Coach Thayer some inspiration in hopes to widen the boys' and girls' teams for wrestling at CHHS.

"I hope that Tristan being a state champ will bring more kids to wrestling; a lot of people don't know about it or it's not widely broadcasted in this school, like other and more popular sports of basketball, football and baseball," said Coach Thayer. "They've also opened up wrestling to a sanction of girls' wrestling this year; this was the first year of girl state championships. So, before, girls had to wrestle with guys, and now it's only girls and a state championship, so I'm hoping that that brings out some girls to the team and brings out more people to come out for wrestling. I always struggle to have a full team."

All in all, Carter put in the work that was needed to in order to achieve one of his biggest goals. With a winning streak of 62-2 for this 2022-2023 winter wrestling season, he has made the

Photo courtesy of Tristan Carter



Carter will spend the rest of his time preparing for nationals. He is going to continue to put in the work and see how far it takes him.

accomplishment of winning state championships. Now, he will take the time that's needed to prepare for nationals on March 24-25 at Virginia Beach.

"I'm just gonna' do what I've been doing: wrestling every single day for three hours a day," said Carter.

With the recent success that Carter has come into, he has some advice for other people who are trying to achieve their own goals.

"It's gonna' be hard, but put in the work because you're not gonna' do anything if you don't put in the work," said Carter.

Senior athletes commit to various colleges, universities

by Avery Pack and Arianna Wooldridge

As the school year comes to an end, five CHHS football athletes are continuing their football career and education at the collegiate level.

Daviyon Warner, 12, is putting his skills to use at Louisburg College in Louisburg, N.C.

“What else am I supposed to do? I love the game,” said Warner, who aims to never stop working and improving.

Warner is described by Coach Justin Keeler, head varsity football coach, and Coach Amaris Dixon, varsity football coach, as a dedicated player and teammate and overall a hard-worker.

“I love his versatility,” said Coach Dixon. “We put him in a lot of different positions and spots, but he did what he needed to do.”

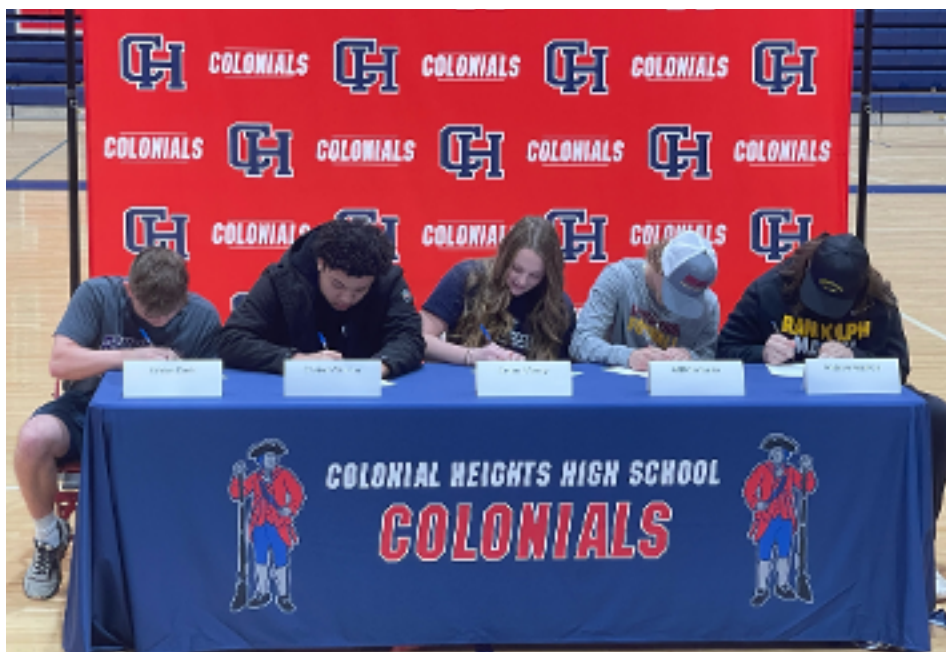
“We had a hard time taking him off of the field because he could do so much and he was great at what he did,” said Coach Keeler.

Will Cimburke, 12, has decided he is going to further his studies at the Apprentice School in Newport News, Va. Cimburke is described as a

need to do,” said Coach Dixon.

Ricardo Trinidad, 12, football player, is continuing

Photo by Ava Kwiek



Senior athletes sign their commitment letters to continue their athletic careers at the college/university level. Ashton Davis will play football at Bluffton University in Bluffton, Ohio; Daviyon Warner will play football at Louisburg College in Louisburg, N.C.; Emma Moody will play field hockey at Virginia Wesleyan University in Virginia Beach, Va.; Will Cimburke will play football at Apprentice School in Newport News, Va.; and Andrew Madren will play football at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Va.

strong leader by Coach Dixon.

“My favorite part about football is the atmosphere and friendships I’ve made along the way,” said Cimburke. “I am grateful for the bonds I’ve made with all of my teammates.”

“I love his leadership; he can get any guy to follow him and get them to do what they

his football career at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Va .

“I love the excitement of the game,” said Trinidad. “There is always something going on.”

He used the off-season to his advantage and continued to work toward his goals.

“He worked hard and became faster, which helped

Photo by Ava Kwiek



Senior Emma Moody will continue her field hockey career at Virginia Wesleyan University in Virginia Beach, Va. Many of her field hockey teammates joined her at the signing ceremony. Pictured along with Emma Moody and her father SRO Wayne Moody, field hockey coach, are Mackenzie Stratton, 12; Elana Chapman, 12; Kayla Buffalow, 10; Kaelie Richey, 10; Jessica Sprouse, 12; Delaney Stratton, 12; Arianna Woolridge, 9; Abby Emory, 9; and Ava Kwiek, 11.

him at running back,” said Coach Keeler. “He had a knack for making the big plays when we sorely needed it. We don’t beat Southampton without his big play in overtime. I’m very proud of the work he put in during the off-season and the season he had.”

Andrew Madren, 12, is committed to go to

Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Va.

“I chose Randolph-Macon because of a lot of things, but the biggest things are the coach, his program, their career center and everything that comes with graduating from Randolph-Macon,” said Madren.

Coach Dixon describes Madren as tough with great

leadership abilities.

“I admire his physical and mental toughness,” said Coach Dixon. “He is one of the most physically and mentally tough players I’ve ever coached.”

Ashton Davis, 12, is continuing his football career at Bluffton University in Bluffton, Ohio.

“I love football because it takes up so much of my time so I have no time to stress over little things,” said Davis.

Coach Keeler admires his toughness and selflessness.

“He got injured early in the season but was still committed to serving his teammates in any capacity that he could,” said Keeler.

Davis offered some advice for aspiring athletes: “No matter what injuries or what anyone says, you need to keep pushing through it and have hope,” said Davis.



McKenzie named February Senior of the Month

by Whitnie Hoyle

It was a normal school day when Ashton McKenzie, 12, was called down to the office where he then found Mr. Mike Nelson, principal, waiting for him with the exciting news of being selected as February Senior of the Month.

“I was honestly surprised when I first got the news and thought I had gotten in trouble for something when I was called down,” said McKenzie. “Once I realized what was going on, though, I was excited and appreciative of being selected.”

Over the course of his high school years, McKenzie has formed important relationships, made memories and gotten through challenges. One of the many difficulties McKenzie faced was online learning.

“It was difficult to learn over Zoom during the time of COVID; because of this, I figured out ways for me to teach myself what was

needed to know, which has helped me substantially since then,” said McKenzie.

Being on the baseball team allowed him to meet new people, helped him keep up

Photo courtesy of eDesign



McKenzie plans to attend Longwood University to study history after high school.

McKenzie has devoted all four of his high school years to the baseball team. He was on the JV team during grades 9-10 and then switched to varsity for grades 11-12.

with his grades and left him with many fond memories.

“It is hard to figure out specific memories that stood out from my high school career, but the bus rides

home after a big win are always exciting,” said McKenzie.

Regardless of the challenges faced throughout his high school career, McKenzie managed to form strong bonds with some of his peers as well as his teachers. One of the teachers that inspired McKenzie through the years is Ms. Sarah Crinkley, biology teacher.

“Ms. Crinkley is a teacher that I know if I need anything at all I can go to and she will help however she can,” said McKenzie. “Whether I need help with work or just someone to talk to about something, she is enthusiastic about helping.”

Another teacher that McKenzie looks up to is Mrs. Christina Major, AP Government and VA/US

History teacher.

“Mrs. Major is also someone else I look up to. Her AP Government class has been my absolute favorite one I have taken in high school,” said McKenzie. “A lot of that had to do with the way she taught; she gave me plenty of chances to discuss things and get to really know the topics we were discussing rather than just lectures.”

Being on the baseball team gave McKenzie many memories to hang on to, but it also provided him a role model in Mr. Brennan Hoffer, history teacher and boys' varsity baseball coach.

“Coach Hoffer has definitely inspired me, whether in school or out on the field,” said McKenzie. “He has become one of the major role models in my life and has helped me gain plenty of opportunities educationally.”

Mr. Hoffer not only coached McKenzie in baseball over the years, but also taught him in AP United States History.

“I believe Ashton emulates what it means to be a

Photo by Whitnie Hoyle



Outside of school, McKenzie enjoys SCUBA diving during his free time.

'Colonial,'" said Mr. Hoffer. "He is one of the top students in his class academically, plays sports, is involved with clubs/school activities, and has more school spirit than most of the kids in the school."

"Ashton has been a model student-athlete and is someone I nominated for this award several times," said Mr. Hoffer. "I am beyond proud of him and cannot wait to see what his future holds." Knowing that this is his last year of high school, McKenzie feels bittersweet about leaving.

"I am excited to graduate to be able to go on and experience opportunities, but also a little disappointed to be leaving this school and the teachers I have made close relationships with," said McKenzie.

After graduating, McKenzie plans to go to Longwood University to study history with a concentration in pre-law, with his ultimate goal to attend law school.

McKenzie has grown in so many ways since his freshman year; however, there is one in particular that helps him the most.

"I have learned to focus more on the little things rather than the end goal, which has helped make going through school a lot less stressful," said McKenzie.

McKenzie prioritizes tasks that make him successful to ensure that his future is stable and worry free.

"Make sure to do the easy things first," said McKenzie. "The most important part is to just show up and participate; if you do that, everything else just falls into place."

Support varsity baseball at their home games!

April Games:

vs. Meadowbrook - Thursday, April 13, at 6 p.m.

@ Shepherd Stadium

vs. L.C. Bird - Monday, April 24, at 6 p.m.

@ Shepherd Stadium

vs. Petersburg - Tuesday, April 25, at 6 p.m.

@ Shepherd Stadium

vs. Dinwiddie - Thursday, April 27, at 6 p.m. @
Shepherd Stadium

May Games:

vs. South Hampton - Monday, May 1, at 6 p.m.

@ Shepherd Stadium

vs. Matoaca - Thursday, May 4, at 6 p.m.

@ Shepherd Stadium

vs. Prince George - Thursday, May 11, at 6 p.m.

@ Shepherd Stadium

Ellenburg 'thankful' to be March Senior of the Month

by Caroline Woodward

After receiving the news that he was chosen as the March Senior of the Month, senior Gray Ellenburg was surprised to be given such an honorable title.

"I was absolutely shocked and very, very thankful that I was named this title," said Ellenburg.

Ellenburg is a varsity baseball player and has also played on the golf team. He said that playing baseball with his teammates is a special memory from his time in high school.

"Baseball has to be all of my favorite memories from high school," said Ellenburg.

Ellenburg said after high school he will miss playing ball with his teammates because he has been close with many of the other players for numerous years and feels as though there has been a brotherhood that has been formed.

"I have played baseball with some of the boys since I was about 6 years old, and high school has been some of the best years with

one of the biggest challenges that he had to face during his high school career.

"COVID was definitely

Photo courtesy of Gray Ellenburg



Other than the memories he made with baseball, Ellenburg said the pep rallies were some of his favorite memories at CHHS.

them," said Ellenburg.

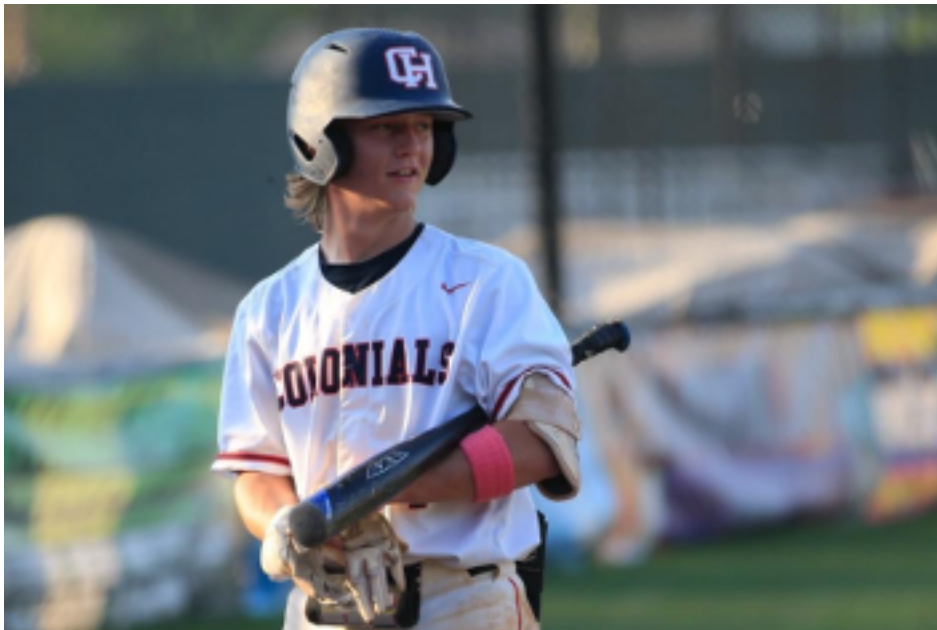
For Ellenburg, the COVID-19 pandemic was

challenge for me -- saying that because I am a hands-on learner," said Ellenburg. "I just had to try

extra hard and push through those years that COVID had ruined.”

Advice that Ellenburg would give to underclassmen would be to not delay completing work and to take classes seriously.

Photo courtesy of Gray Ellenburg



Ellenburg has played varsity baseball for CH since he was a freshman, and he has also played on the golf team.

Since freshman year, Ellenburg feels that his classroom habits and time-management skills have improved.

“I have learned to knock my work out right when I get it,” said Ellenburg.

Being academically successful has always been a goal of Ellenburg’s, and he

feels that members of his family have always pushed him to strive for his best.

“My mom has always pushed me to get good grades my whole life, so I feel as if I grew up trying to get good grades,” said Ellenburg.

Teachers that have inspired Ellenburg the most during his years at the high school include Ms. Sarah Crinkley, biology teacher, and Mr. Brennan Hoffer, VA/US History teacher.

“Mr. Hoffer has helped me all the way through high school from being a baseball player to being a

student-athlete and to just being an overall good person,” said Ellenburg.

Mr. Hoffer has coached Ellenburg in both baseball and football during Ellenburg’s time at the high school. Mr. Hoffer describes Ellenburg both as a determined student-athlete and an individual.

“Gray is a young man with potential in many aspects -- as a ball player, as a student, and as a leader,” said Mr. Hoffer. “Knowing Gray, and the fierce competitor he is, I have no doubt that he will excel and be successful at whatever he strives to do.”

Ms. Crinkley is another teacher that Ellenburg has looked up to while being a student at the high school. He describes Ms. Crinkley to be a teacher that he can trust and confide in when he may be struggling.

“Another person I would love to mention is Ms. Crinkley,” said Ellenburg. “She has been the nicest

teacher I have ever had in all my years at CH, and she truly makes me feel like I can come to her for anything.”

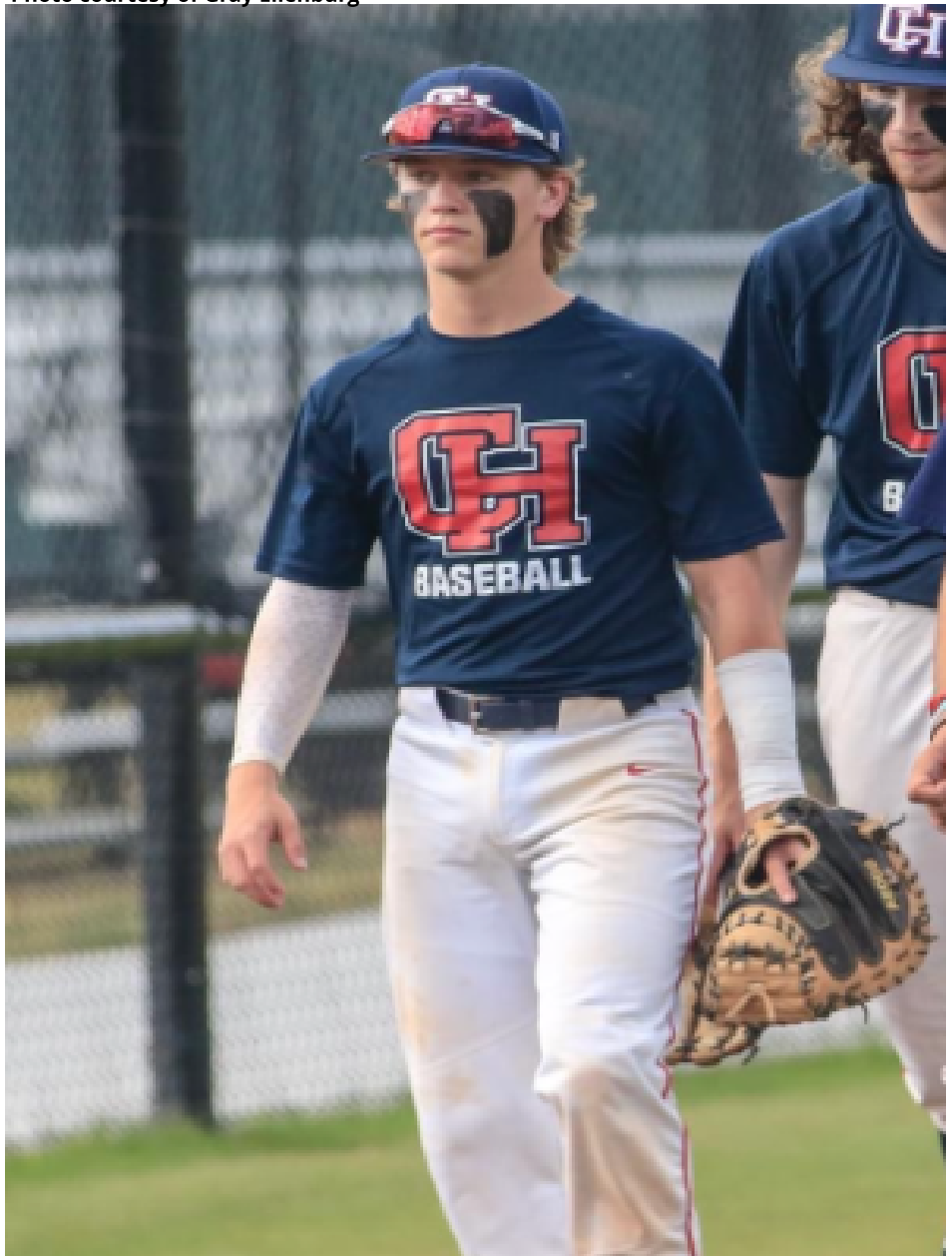
Ms. Crinkley had Ellenburg as a student in one of her first Biology I Honors classes, which she says holds a very special place in her heart. Ms. Crinkley describes Ellenburg as a hard worker and a dedicated student.

“Gray is very well rounded,” said Ms. Crinkley. “This can be seen in his academic performance, level of play on the field, and his large number of after-school activities.”

Ms. Crinkley also said that she has loved seeing how much Ellenburg has grown since his freshman year.

“I have enjoyed watching him mature from a freshman in Biology I to a senior in high school,” said Ms. Crinkley. “He is always a cheerful face to see in the hallway and is definitely a student I will miss seeing

Photo courtesy of Gray Ellenburg



Coach Hoffer views Ellenburg as leader, not only on the field, but also in the classroom.

next year.”

Even though Ellenburg made some of his favorite memories in high school, he said that he is ready for his next chapter.

“I think I am ready to graduate,” said Ellenburg. “I’m a little nervous but

more excited than anything.”

After graduation, Ellenburg will be attending Marymount University, majoring in business management while also continuing his baseball career.

Etkins takes the time and dedication to publish book

by Seth Jackson and Ava Kwiek

When the month of February started, Ajhauna Etkins, 9, published her original book *Lux The Fairy: A Book About Confidence*, now available on Amazon.

Etkins portrays the multifaceted nature of confidence and conveys that through the lens of the children's book medium.

"In my book, I have a girl, and she's really nervous for her presentation, and that's happened to me before, so I feel like I definitely took some inspiration from that," said Etkins.

As she wrote her book, Etkins went through many struggles and internal pressure, of which she later learned how to overcome.

"Finding the right words" provided the biggest struggle for Etkins. "I feel like the hardest part was coming up with what to say in the book."

The story of how her book came to be is also a story about confidence, inspiration,

Photo by Jenna Mason



When the month of February was just beginning, Etkins published her book, *Lux The Fairy: A Book About Confidence*. The book is available for purchase on Amazon.com.

emboldenment, difficulty and motivation.

In the Etkins's household, taking part in family projects is a common occurrence. The family tries their best to engage in fun, practical activities that will not only help further their understanding of the world, but also help them find a

place within it.

"It's not like something we typically do, but it was like a family project for us to all get a book out there," said Etkins. "My youngest brother is thinking of writing another one."

Etkins also understands the importance of receiving help when she needs to as well as

shedding light on the efforts of others who work hard to deserve it; in this case, she recognizes her brother's accomplishments.

"He is already starting on his second book," said Etkins. "He is so good at it; he knows all the steps. He helps me, his older sister, with my books. He was really helpful, and I'm so proud of him."

Her mother was also a definite source of motivation and emboldenment for Etkins.

"My mom pushed all of us to write our books, and for a

bit, I didn't want to because my grades were so low, but [my mom] pushed me and my siblings, and then we ended up publishing our books," said Etkins. "She's always pushing us to do stuff and get out there."

When it comes to advice for up-and-coming authors, Etkins had a new perspective on the matter.

"I would say just stay consistent," said Etkins. "While you're staying consistent, also pace yourself at the same time."

Mrs. Terri Moody, English 9

Academic/Honors and Journalism 1-4 teacher, was ecstatic after having read Etkins's newly published book.

"I was very excited for her and very proud that she could accomplish so much at such a young age," said Mrs. Moody. "Then, I found her on Amazon, and I was even more excited for her because that made her accomplishment really real."

Mrs. Amanda Creasey, English 11 and Dual Enrollment College Composition teacher, shared the sentiment on Etkins's achievement and had some of her own advice to share for new authors, as well.

"No one can tell your story but you," said Mrs. Creasey, who is in the last stages of publishing a book. "You are the one best equipped to write the story inside you, and someone out there needs to read it. Don't give in to impostor syndrome. If you write, you are a writer."

Photo courtesy of Ajhauna Etkins



The Etkins family engages in fun, practical activities that will give them a better understanding of the world and help them find a place within it.

Hartman excels in balancing school, athletics

by Nathan Frazier and Emma Knode

For over a decade, Brooke Hartman, 12, has dedicated her time and effort to softball.

"I've been playing softball ever since t-ball," said Hartman.

Hartman's dad inspired her to pursue whatever she does best; that encouragement led her to play softball.

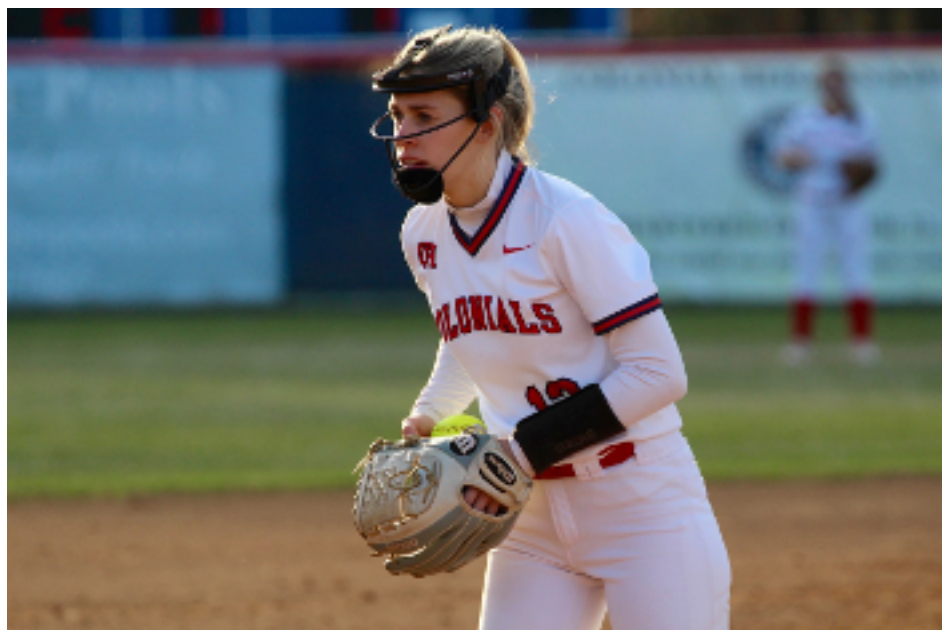
"My dad and I used to go out and practice together all the time," said Hartman. "We always do it together."

Photo courtesy of Brooke Hartman



Hartman has played softball ever since t-ball. Now that she is a senior, she has decided that she does not want to play softball in college.

Photo courtesy of Brooke Hartman



Hartman pitches for the girls' varsity softball team. In addition to pitching, she also plays center-field and shortstop.

Hartman currently pitches for the girls' varsity softball team.

"I've also played a lot of center-field and shortstop," said Hartman.

Coach Chris Brandt, varsity softball coach, thinks Hartman is capable of doing whatever she wants to do.

"Brooke will do what's best for the team, whether it's pitch or play outfield," said Coach Brandt. "She is definitely the best at her position."

As Hartman's senior year comes to an end, so will her softball career. As a senior, Hartman will be playing her last year of softball. Although Coach Brandt feels that "she

Photo courtesy of Brooke Hartman



Hartman puts in the time and dedication needed to be a captain for the Colonials softball team. She encourages other players to do what's right and put their best effort in.

can easily play college softball if she so chooses," Hartman has decided otherwise.

"I've decided I don't want to play in college," said Hartman. "It's sad that I'm playing my last season here."

She puts in the effort and dedication needed of a captain for the Colonials.

"She has a strong work ethic," said Coach Brandt. "When she misses, she doesn't mind putting in extra

work before or after school or practices."

Softball hasn't been the only sport Hartman has played. She has also played field hockey.

"I have played field hockey ever since sophomore year," said Hartman. "Softball has taken up most of my time, though, so I haven't played in a minute."

Hartman encourages younger players to do what's right and put in their best effort. She tries to get other girls to understand that hard work is important.

"It is a lot of work, and you have to put in a lot of time into it if you want to be successful," said Hartman.

Support varsity softball at their home games!

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@ Civic Field

vs. Prince George - Thursday, May 11, at 6 p.m.

@ Civic Field

Shackleford solidifies bonds made with students, staff

by Riley Bridgman

Although substitute teachers typically come and go without staying for too long or forming connections, Mr. Columbus Shackleford, permanent substitute teacher, is known and loved by staff and students at CHHS.

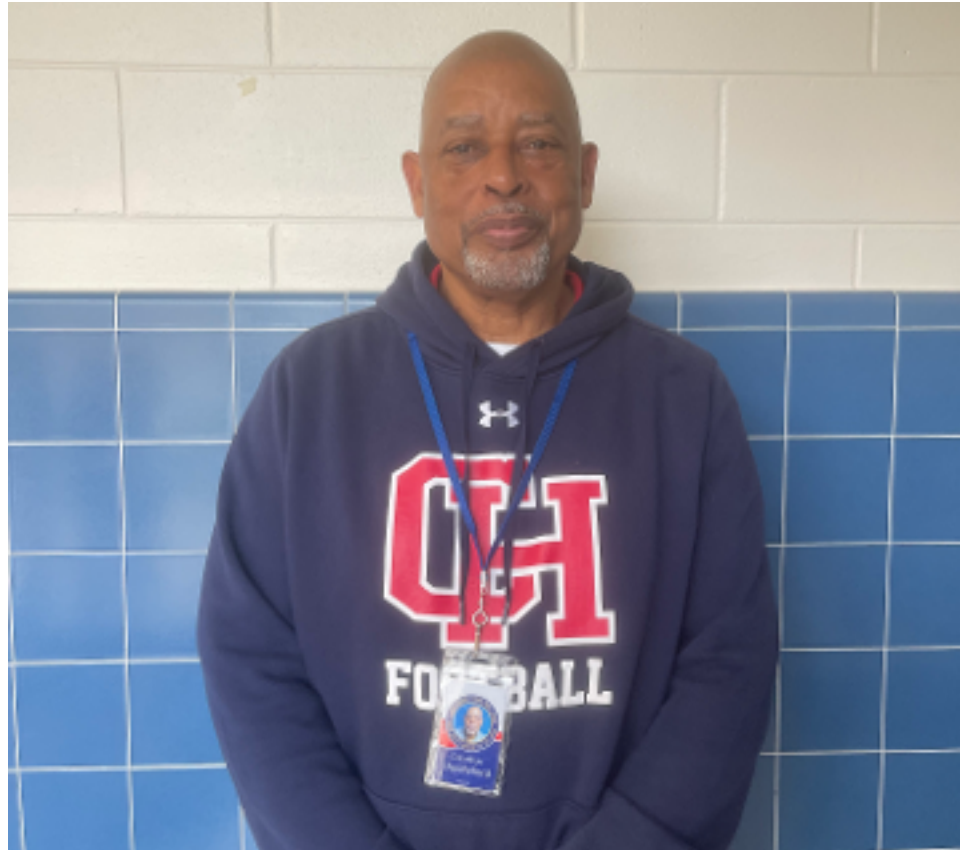
Growing up, Mr. Shackleford lived in King and Queen County, where he lived the country lifestyle.

"I had a very good life growing up; it was country living," said Mr. Shackleford. "We grew a lot of our own vegetables that we ate because we had gardens. We also had pigs, chickens and all that growing up. It was a good country life experience."

Mr. Shackleford graduated from King and Queen Central High School. From there, he attended Virginia State University, where he majored in chemistry and international studies. With his degree, he got a job at Phillip Morris as a research analyst.

"I was a research analyst my

Photo by Riley Bridgman



One of the things Mr. Shackleford does in his free time is officiate little league, high school and semi-pro football games.

whole career there," said Mr. Shackleford. "My job was to cover everything from the raw materials to the finished product of a cigarette."

At this job, Mr. Shackleford would test and check flavorings of the tobacco products.

"I tested the tobacco, the paper, the flavors, and I also started to research things we were doing as far as alcohol products and food."

After Mr. Shackleford retired, Mr. John Thomas, Jr.,

assistant principal, reached out to an old friend for help during the shortage of substitutes.

"We have been lifelong friends, and when he retired, we talked about how nice our school division was for me and my wife," said Mr. Thomas. "We discussed the idea of substituting, and the rest is history."

Mr. Thomas and Mr. Shackleford met while living at Halcun Manor in Petersburg.

"We met on the basketball court, and we became friends," said Mr. Shackelford. "We would go to church together, and we played softball on the same team together."

Mr. Shackelford is glad he chose to come to CHHS due to the closeness of the students and staff.

"It seems like it's a family," said Mr. Shackelford. "Not just with the students, but also with the teachers. I feel like I get along very well with the teachers. If there are things going on that I have any issues or concerns about, they always help me out and point me in the right direction."

Mr. Shackelford states that the reason he looks forward to going to work every day is because of the students.

"I look forward to coming here each day," said Mr. Shackelford. "People ask why I come so far, and it's because of the students. Someone helped me out along the way, so all I want to do is just give back a little something."

While he enjoys his job,

outside of work Mr. Shackelford likes to go to church and officiates high school, little league and semi-pro football games. Mr. Shackelford has been married to his wife, Ammie, for 13 years, and has a son, Columbus Shackelford, Jr., who is 36.

Although Mr. Shackelford has accomplished a lot in his life, there is one accomplishment that sticks out that he is most proud of.

"I'm most proud of my relationship with God," said Mr. Shackelford. "He has been very patient with me. Trust me: I'm not a very easy person sometimes to get along with, and I just feel like He has helped to guide and strengthen me to be a better person."

During his time at CHHS, students have discovered just how amazing of a person Mr. Shackelford is.

"Mr. Shackelford's best quality is his ability to change people's day just by his presence," said Olivia Harrison, 12. "It's a very rare attribute to have, but he

embodies it so well. He is able to turn anything negative into something positive, which has enlightened me to try and look for the good in everything. Adjusting to having a substitute when your teacher is absent can often be difficult, but Mr. Shack makes it a great and easy transition. You know it's going to be a good class period if Mr. Shack is your substitute. He is the one substitute that every student wants to have, which explains a lot about the type of person he is and the influence he has on students."

Harrison states that Mr. Shackelford impacted students because of his positive attitude and consistent, bright smile.

"You can tell just by talking with him that he is an extremely genuine person and cares about all of the students," said Harrison. "He is extremely thoughtful and full of energy. He's easy to get along with and extremely patient with anyone he's talking to. He truly is a ray of sunshine."

Colonial Players present "The Wizard of Oz"

by Alissie Harvey and Whitney Williamson

The Colonial Players clicked their red heels together and said "there's no place like home" for this year's play, "The Wizard of Oz" at Colonial Heights Middle School on April 28-29.

When students think of a school play, they may think only of drama students and singers, but that is not always an accurate assumption. Students with all interests are welcomed by Mr. Andrew Bryce, drama teacher, to audition for the plays produced by CHHS. Assistance with setting up and taking down the props and decorations, making costumes, building props for scenes, lighting and music are several out-of-the-spotlight activities that students can do for the play.

As everyone knows, working hard for something in life is important. The school play is most definitely not excluded from that adage.

"The play is based on singing 16 bars or 30 seconds of music," said Mr. Bryce. "Being able to read scenes and monologues is also an important skill you need to have when auditioning."

When selecting people for the play, Mr. Bryce struggled with choosing the best actors for each part.

"Figuring out who exactly is going to play each part can definitely be a challenge," said Mr. Bryce. "There are a lot of talented students who audition."

One issue that not many students worry about when participating in school productions is the budget. Even though the budget may be low for theater productions currently, Mr. Bryce has high

hopes for next year's play.

"The budget can impact what you can achieve overall in a play," said Mr. Bryce. "That is why I am so excited to see the [fine arts wing renovation] for next year."

Maria Sorensen, 12, who plays the lead role of Dorothy Gale, also welcomes people with no experience to get involved in the drama community.

"Even if you have no experience in theater, it is an amazing experience," said Sorensen. "The skills you

Photo courtesy of Elissa Sorenson



Kayla Terry, 12, reviews her script during an after-school rehearsal at CHMS. The play will be presented at the CHMS auditorium due to ongoing construction at CHHS.

develop doing drama can be applied to many aspects of your life.”

If a student has a hard time getting involved in social activities but has the desire to get involved, then drama may be the solution for them. Theater productions can be a rewarding experience that can open their eyes to fun, social situations that can ease their anxiety.

“Doing drama helps immensely with public speaking, job interviews and overall self-confidence and creativity,” said Sorensen. “Drama is just an overall fun extracurricular.”

Drama can be an activity that gets students out of their comfort zone and shows them that school extracurriculars can be fun and rewarding.

“Doing drama, I've made most of my closest friends or bonded more with people I already knew,” said Sorensen. “In drama, you grow relationships extremely fast because you are around the same people on an almost daily basis.”

Just like many other students in the drama community, Sorensen has participated in other theatrical productions.

“I was previously in the ‘25th

Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee’ with school,” said Sorensen. “My experience with ‘Spelling Bee’ and ‘Wizard of Oz’ has been pretty different, especially because of Ms. Fehlner leaving and Mr. Bryce being our new teacher.”

This year's play may be the last for many seniors involved in the

Photo courtesy of Amazon.com



drama community, like Sorensen, to participate in. According to Sorensen, it motivates them to keep their attendance up and come to school with a good attitude.

“I'm overall enjoying this show a little more,” said Sorensen. “Being a senior, it's given me the incentive to get to school; it's something to look forward to.”

Just like Sorensen, even though a student may not be

interested in being a well-known actor for a future job, the experiences they can obtain from theater could be worthwhile while they're still in high school. Students can acquire some fun, occupational skills.

“I have considered doing acting as a job in the future, but being a ‘famous actor’ isn't really a goal of mine,” said Sorensen. “I'd much rather write for TV and movies or be involved in community theater.”

Expectedly, the number of people participating in the play affects the quality of the production. Having a larger cast can give an opportunity to make long-lasting connections with the people in them and give an even better performance for their audience.

“We have a much larger cast now than we did in ‘Spelling Bee,’ which is fun being able to talk and hang out with all these different people,” said Sorensen. “With many more people involved, I think we will be able to put on a better production.”

If a student is interested in helping with the tech and band production of the play, then he/she needs to contact Mr. Bryce.

March gives recognition to women's history

by Paris Baldwin and Logan Buck

Women's History Month occurs in March every year. This is a time to celebrate and appreciate the struggles and contributions of women in American society.

Women's History Month dates back to 1987, the year U.S. President Jimmy Carter declared March 2-8 as National Women's History Week.

"From the first settlers who came to our shores... men and women have worked together to build this nation," said President Carter. "Too often the women were unsung, and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed, but the achievements, strength and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well."

Later on in 1987, the entire month of March was recognized as National Women's History Month under U.S. President Ronald

Reagan. However, this was not an easy fight for women.

A victory of the women's rights movement that directly impacts high school sports is Title IX, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities.

Photo by Logan Buck



Lisa Zheng, 9, plays in the third seed for the girls' tennis team. At many schools, Title IX created more opportunities for girls to play sports.

On June 4, 1920, the 19th Amendment was passed by Congress. Later, on Aug. 18, 1920, the 19 Amendment was ratified. This gave women the right to vote after a decades-long struggle.

A few decades later in 1966, the National Organization for Women (NOW) was

established. They are still active today with 550 chapters in all 50 U.S. states. They have around 500,000 members making efforts to end sex discrimination, according to now.org.

After many wins and losses, Title IX was passed by Congress on June 23, 1972. As part of the Education Amendments of 1972, it prohibits sex-based discrimination in any school or any other education program that receives funding from the federal government.

Later, after Title IX, WEEA, the Women's Educational Equity Act first enacted by Congress in 1974, provides grants and contracts for all levels of education, statewide or general significance to overcome sex stereotyping.

Once Title IX was passed, some legislators were looking for ways to weaken the law. In response, professional tennis player Billie Jean King testified before the United States Senate Committee on Health,

Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP). She mentioned problems that occurred in women's sports, such as budget. Her statement helped with the consideration of the WEEA in 1974.

The WEEA stated schools shall develop "nonsexist curricula, personnel training programs, and vocational training and career counseling." It also improved physical education programs through the funding of Title IX.

Title IX was later strengthened by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 under President Ronald Reagan. According to House.gov, Reagan had vetoed the law; however, the Senate overrode his veto by a vote of 73-24. Later that day, the House of Representatives voted in favor by a vote of 292-133.

The passing of the Civil Rights Restoration Act required educational institutions that received federal funding to adhere to all federal civil rights laws. This included those related to

Photo by Logan Buck



The girls' tennis team includes Ashy Pillai, 9; Kayla Thompson, 12; Lisa Zheng, 9; Lisa Ou, 9; Gabby Wolfe, 12; Katiya Isaman, 9; Addison Chartier, 9; Riley Ford, 9; Jennifer Buenaventura, 12; and Caitlyn Bahn, 9. The team is coached by Mr. Nicholas Davis.

gender, race, disability and discrimination involving students, faculty and staff.

The law continues to help citizens today by ensuring the funding is used toward equality and the prevention of discrimination. Not only has it prevented discrimination, but also it holds those accountable who are guilty of these discriminatory practices.

The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act of 1994 was passed as another way to prevent discrimination by requiring universities and colleges to make available gender equity information about their athletic programs. This means they have to provide information about sports teams, athletic scholarships awarded to women and men and overall expenses for women's and men's teams.

The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act further boosted women's opportunities in athletics. These opportunities have been proven helpful through the recognition of athletes, such as Serena Williams, Mia Hamm, Lisa Leslie and Billie Jean King.

After years of being excluded from sports, fair educational opportunities and respect, women were finally starting to be recognized. The beginning of this recognition started with women's suffrage and was solidified through Title IX. After many additions, American society has reached the standing point it is currently at today.

"You don't understand inclusion," said King, "unless you've been excluded."

Acknowledging disabilities promotes equality

by Caroline Woodward

According to nationaltoday.com, the month of March was declared National

1987. This awareness month was created in efforts to concentrate on how Americans with disabilities contribute to

Many people find the recognition of Disability Awareness Month to be important because it helps individuals that may be uneducated about disabilities understand people with disabilities and their differences.

Photo courtesy of Kristina Adams



Dominic Davis wins gold in the basketball event at the Special Olympics championship.

Developmental Disability society in all ways that Awareness Month by other Americans do. President Ronald Reagan in

Special education teachers, Ms. Kristina Adams and Mrs. Nici Duncan, work with students who have disabilities and impairments daily. They both explained that even though these students are different from others, they are still as capable as every other individual.

"I think recognition of disabilities and what our students are like [is important]," said Mrs. Duncan. "There is really nothing wrong with them. They are just like us; they are just different and special in their own ways."

Being special education teachers, Ms. Adams and

Mrs. Duncan spend time working with their students to prepare them for life outside of school.

“I have two classes of Life Skills. We teach them how to live day to day,” said Mrs. Duncan. “We teach how they will live on their own if they are able to live on their own.”

In these classes, Mrs. Duncan explains that her students learn how to do basic skills, like cooking. She and her co-teachers also teach Education of Employment.

“I also teach Education for Employment, which is educating them about how to get a job, how to make resumés and how to live on their own,” said Mrs. Duncan.

Casey Wray, 12, is one of Mrs. Duncan’s and Ms. Adams’s students who currently has a job at Grant’s Coffee Shop in Chester Village. His job consists of many tasks, but his favorite part about his

Photo courtesy of Kristina Adams



Casey Wray enjoys working at Grant’s Coffee Shop with his fellow colleagues. He always likes to check in with his colleagues to see how they are doing,

job is assuring that his co-workers are doing well. dishes, cleaning tables, sometimes cleaning

“[Tasks include] washing

bathrooms, and I make sure

that my employees are doing pretty good," said Wray.

According to nationaltoday.com, only

contribute to why so many people are uneducated about disabilities and some of the struggles that people with disabilities face daily.

To allow students to

Adams take their students on field trips to different places in Colonial Heights to expose them to new experiences and people.

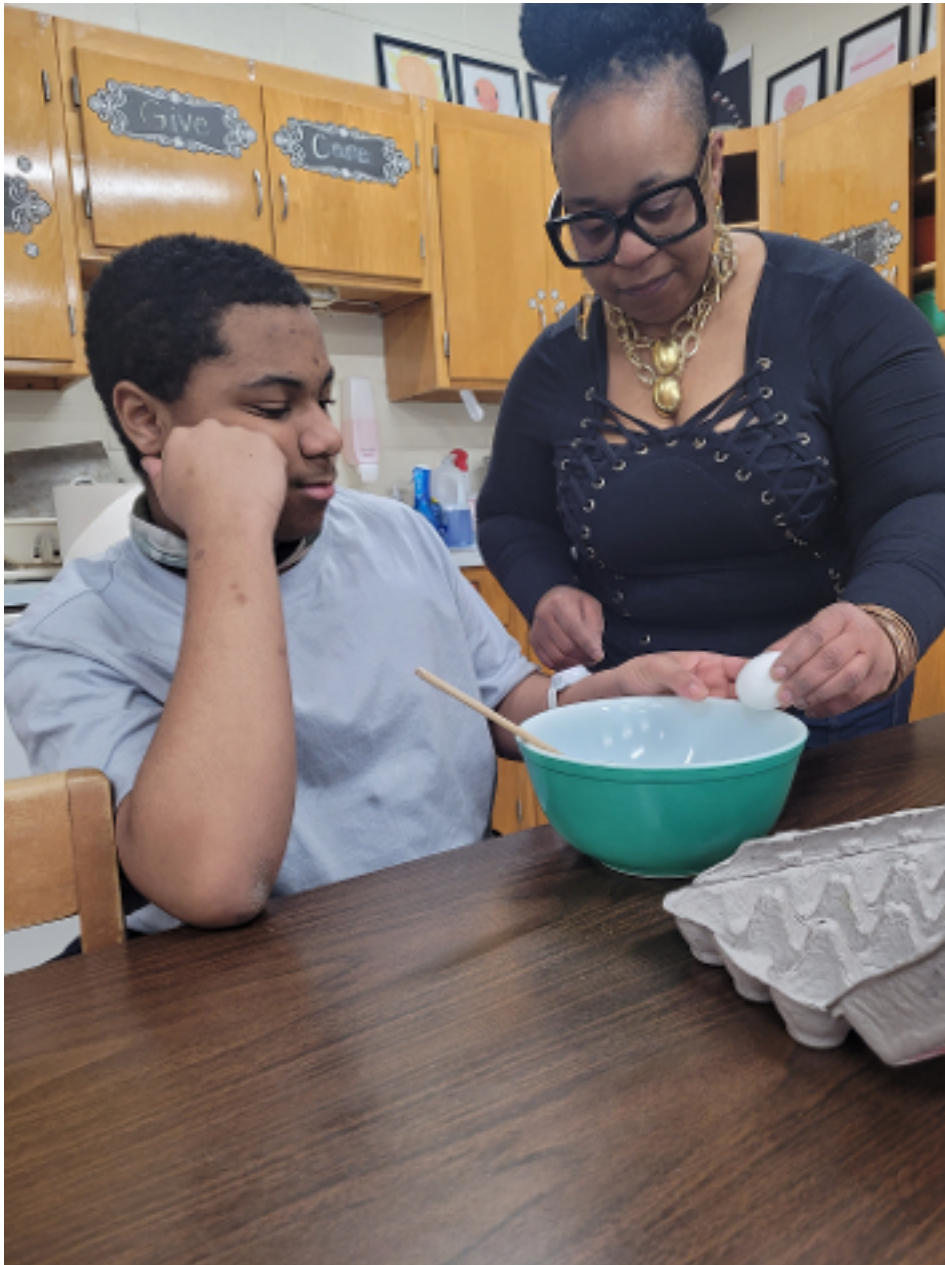
"Every other Friday we do community based-instruction," said Ms. Adams. "We go out in the community and learn skills, such as how to order in a restaurant, shopping skills, how to make a shopping list, how to find things in a store, how to ask for help when you need it because asking for help is a very basic skill that is important for anyone to have."

While in school, the special education students are acquainted with other students by participating in elective classes.

"We also try to put them in regular classes as much as possible, like PE and art, so that they can be around regular students daily," said Mrs. Duncan.

To get more comfortable with others, Ms. Adams and Mrs. Duncan also try to

Photo courtesy of Kristina Adams



On Wednesdays, Ms. Adams and Mrs. Duncan get their students in a kitchen setting to teach them life skills, like cooking and kitchen safety. Ms. Rosie Carter, paraprofessional, assists with the activities.

approximately 15 percent of the world population is disabled, which may

experience different aspects of the community, Mrs. Duncan and Ms.

motivate their students to get involved as much as possible, both in school and out of school.

"I like for them to be out in the school as much as possible, and I like them to do the things that everyone else does," said Ms. Adams. "We are having the second year of the Champions program, which is a Special Olympics program, where the goal is for general education students and special education students form friendships in a more natural environment

instead of a forced environment."

Dominic Davis, 12, recently participated in the Special Olympics championship, placing first and receiving gold in the basketball event. Davis explained that his favorite things about school are being with his peers and getting his work completed.

"[My favorite thing about school is] doing my work, and I like being with my friends," said Davis.

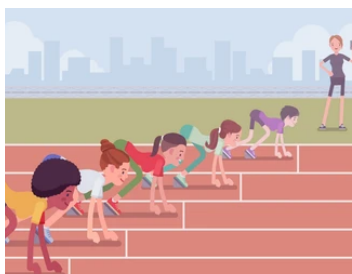
Ms. Adams and Mrs. Duncan continue to work

diligently with their students to help them grow to their fullest potential.

"The students are amazing," said Ms. Adams. "They all come with different personalities, different quirks, different ways that I need to reach them. I get the pleasure of getting to know them all years they are in school and to see them when they're a freshman and reach maturity when they are in high school, like a senior in high school. It never gets old."

Volunteers Needed: Special Olympics Program

Students who're interested and in need of volunteer hours have an opportunity through the Special Olympics Track and Field Program. Ms. Adams is looking for student volunteers to help with practices, which are held every Thursday after school at the track across from the middle school. Students who are interested can contact Ms. Adams by email or in room 68.



YCC and SYC offer summer job options

by Allyson Cobb and Kiyah Wilson

Summer jobs provide opportunities to gain some real life experience, make new friends and get out of the house. The Youth Conservation Corps is a summer employment program that engages young people in work and teaches civic responsibility.

“The YCC program gives students an opportunity to learn about something they’re interested in and helps give students insight on different careers,” said Ms. Becca Lynch, youth and human services administrator.

The YCC program is a learning opportunity for students to prepare for the future.

“Yes, I absolutely feel like summer jobs are beneficial for students,” said Ms. Lynch, “not only because you would get paid a wage, but it’s also good for experience.”

One YCC worker credits this

job for improving his work ethic and his bank account.

“I learned how to work hard and make money,” said Justin Devine, 10, YCC Worker. “I also learned a lot about responsibility and in the long run I got more mature.”

Devine only has one regret about his participation in the program.



“If there was one thing I would change if I did it again, it would be trying to be more social and make more friends,” said Devine.

The Colonial Heights Swim and Yacht Club is another summer job option in Colonial Heights that offers lifeguarding positions for

teenagers during the summer.

Mrs. Cestelle Green, main office secretary, has been the manager of SYC since 2013. Mrs. Green and her family joined the pool in 1990 and have been members ever since.

“I think summer jobs are a great opportunity for

students to make some money without preventing them from participating in after-school activities or negatively impacting their homework time during the school year,” said Mrs. Green. “Summer jobs give them the opportunity also to acquire job skills as well as learn a



COLONIAL HEIGHTS SWIM AND YACHT CLUB

work ethic that will help make them successful in college or the workforce, wherever they plan to go after CHHS.”

This lifeguarding position normally consists of four to five shifts per week; however, the management is flexible to fit the student’s needs as the workers are able to request days off.

“Lifeguarding at SYC can be a pretty good gig; you get to be outside, usually working with friends, and also get to see a lot of people you know,” said Mrs. Green.

Lifeguarding at the pool could be a really influential experience for teens. It allows teens to be more social while on the clock; they might even

see their friends there.

“It isn’t for someone who doesn’t like the water, can’t swim or just doesn’t want to work at a pool,” said Mrs. Green. “Both jobs can benefit you in many different ways, from making money to having a good work ethic.”

Interested in a summer job? Get Connected!

Colonial Heights Office on Youth & Human Services:

<https://www.colonialheightsva.gov/267/Youth-Human-Services>

Becca Lynch, Administrator:

Phone: (804) 520-9286

Email: lynchb@colonialheightsva.gov

Christian Velez-Ortiz, Coordinator:

Phone: (804) 524-8752

Email: velez-ortizc@colonialheightsva.gov

Yvette Hawthorne, Coordinator:

Phone: (804) 520-9289

Email: hawthorney@colonialheightsva.gov

Lloyd Hawthorne, Coordinator:

Phone: (804) 805-2864

Email: hawthornel@colonialheightsva.gov

CHHS adapts as fine arts wing construction continues

by Landon Lopez and Micah Wilkerson

In the spring semester of 2022, the Colonial Heights School Board voted to give the final approval to start construction of the high school's fine arts wing and the front of the building. Since then, CHHS has undergone many renovative modifications.

In August, the fine arts wing was shut down, and the renovation of it started in September of 2022. The goal was to create a more open, modern space for fine art and performing arts classes. The new space will be able to hold more supplies and technology in the coming years.

Since the renovation started, the PE, band, art and chorus classrooms have been relocated throughout different areas of the school. The band students are now meeting in the Tech Center in room T-12. After Spring Break, the art students, who started in rooms 1 and 4, will relocate to the Tech Center,

and the chorus and music students, who started in room 5, have moved to the cafeteria and room 101.

In addition to the fine arts classes that are being relocated, Mrs. Elizabeth Roberts and her math classes have moved into room 210,

Photo by Hendrix Harris



For the first time since CHHS opened as a newly constructed school, the front facade of the building will change. The five classrooms that are located along the front hall will be repurposed into offices.

and Ms. Cassie Damon's math classes have moved into room 31.

The renovation and construction of the front of the high school will begin on April 3. This part of the construction will only affect the five classrooms at the front of the building on the first floor and the tardy station.

Even though the construction will interfere with students and classrooms, Mr. Burnett believes the new renovations will benefit the student body.

"The fine arts wing and the front are getting renovated and updated due to

modernization and creating new spaces that our students deserve," said Mr. Burnett. "I'm very excited to see the after-effects of the construction process and how it affects the school."

The renovation additions include storage space for teachers and students, a better and more updated learning environment, and a new front with additional

security features and spaces for students and staff.

One teacher who has adapted to a multitude of new environments is Mr. Mickey Alderson, art teacher.

“Each time I move to a different location, the walls become smaller and smaller,” said Mr. Alderson. “I just need to remember how fantastic the new room will be once it is finished.”

Although Mr. Alderson has taught in many different locations, he’s still very excited to see the finished product of the construction.

“I know the end results will

Photo by Hendrix Harris



During the next phase of construction, scheduled to begin on April 3, the main entrance of the building and the tardy station will be relocated to the stairwell closer to the auditorium.

be amazing,” said Mr. Alderson. “I am so ready to be in a newly renovated art room.”

Mr. Burnett believes that the projected completion of the renovations should be either December 2023 or

January 2024.

“We’d love to have all of it finished by the second semester of next year, including all of the outside and indoor renovations,” said Mr. Burnett.

Symphonic band earns all superiors during state assessment



The CHHS Symphonic Band received straight Superior at their State Assessment. Straight Superior is the highest possible rating a band can get. Along with the marching band's Superior rating in the fall, the CHHS symphonic band received a Virginia Honor Band status for the 22nd year in a row.

Classroom decor affects environment

by Aurora Lee and Ethan Leininger

Classroom decorations are a vital part to any classroom atmosphere, whether it's inspirational quotes across the wall or pictures of equations to help students remember.

"It can improve just because I'm constantly adding things to my office. I have fidget toys, candy, snacks," said Ms. Deona Guy, counselor. "I put things in my office so if someone is having a bad day, I want to give them a way to release themselves."

Indeed, there are other ways to have decorations in the classroom or office; the atmosphere could help students relax or calm down and give them that sense of being in a safe place.

"[Ms. Guy's office] is very calming, nice. It smells nice. I like the colors," said Zoi Mckenzie, 9. "It helps relieve stress and soothes my nerves whenever my nerves are through the roof."

Getting feedback is

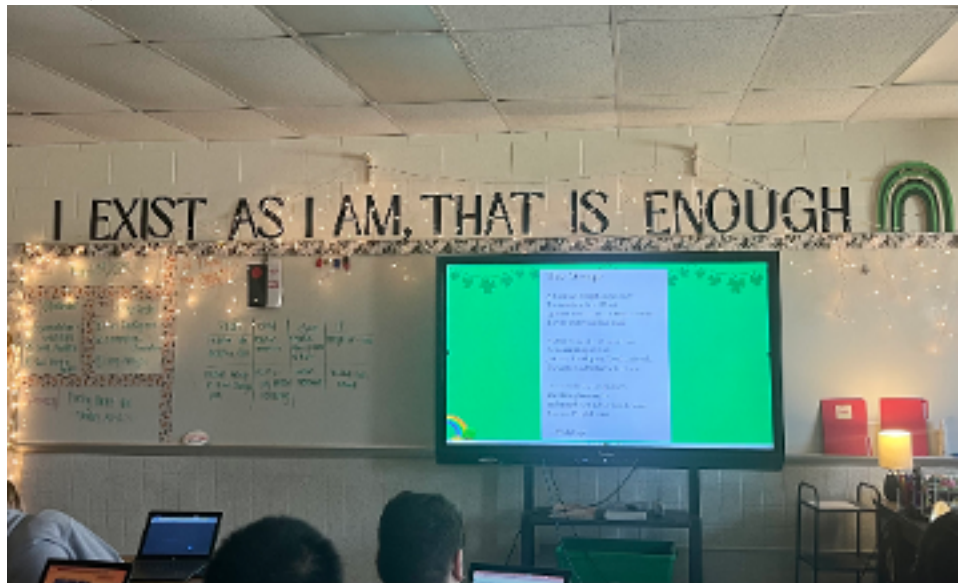
important because a student's opinion is based on how decorations affect them.

"There is a lot of stuff in this room," said Mr. Andrew Bryce, drama teacher. "Things can get overwhelming if too

in her classroom can extend beyond the walls of room 211.

"I have always wanted to create a space where students feel accepted and cared for, and it is only because of the

Photo by Aurora Lee



According to many students in a *Colonial Courier* survey, Ms. Elizabeth Gates, English 10 teacher, has created a warm, welcoming classroom environment.

much decor is put into a room."

"So I was coming in, being a new teacher," said Mr. Bryce. "I wanted to create a vibe of joy and something more comfortable and not give off that sense of being at a desk all class."

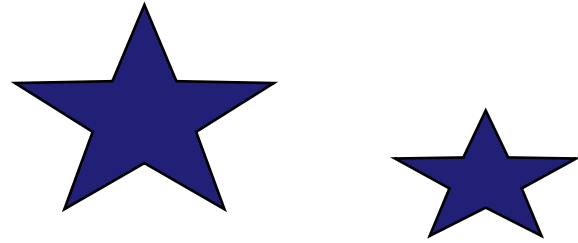
Ms. Elizabeth Gates, English 10 teacher, believes that the community created

work of these students that we built a community like this in this room," said Ms. Gates. "I hope they take that feeling with them and try to spread it around. How can you make others feel welcome, safe, and loved, no matter what room you're in? I hope they remember that they can always come back if they need a little boost!"

Which teacher has the best classroom decorations/atmosphere? Why?

Makayla Poindexter, 9 ~

"Ms. Hogan: I love how the bright lights are always dim, and the fairy lights provide a sense of calm and helps me not get headaches, so I can focus on work way better."



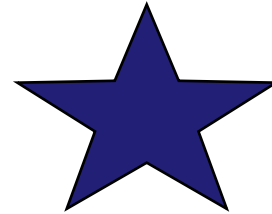
Jerry Dong, 12 ~

"Mrs. Melis: because of its comfortable furniture and Spanish themed paintings and vases."



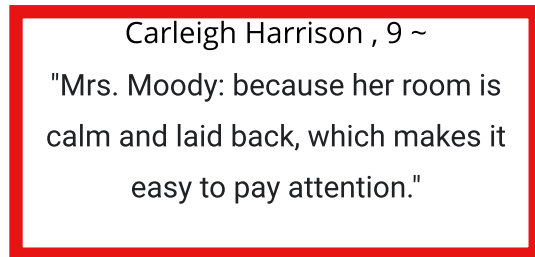
Justis Merriman, 10 ~

"Ms. Gates:
Her classroom is so kind, calm and welcoming. I love to go in there every day."



Carleigh Harrison , 9 ~

"Mrs. Moody: because her room is calm and laid back, which makes it easy to pay attention."



Dawson Moody, 11 ~

"Mr. Reiersen: His room is so cool with all the tech gadgets and video game posters and robots and space things."



Gavin Shelton, 12 ~

"Mrs. [Sam] Smith: her room is very cozy, decorated, welcoming. It has a very homey feel to it. "



Juniors celebrate the tradition of Ring Dance in 2023

Photos by Terri Moody and Jamie Young



Pictured from left to right and top to bottom: Lillian Zervakis, 11; Daniel Beltran, 11; Bracie Bennett, 11; Aaden Sconyers, guest of Bracie Bennett; Ashton Hendricks, 11; Christian Black, 10; Dylan Adams, 11; Samantha McKinney, 11; Brady Moring, guest of Addison Williams; Steven Ackerman, 11; Remi Louthen, guest of Steven Ackerman; Addison Williams, 11; Kennedy Saunders, 11; Savannah Stephenson, 11; Sydney Catron, 11; Catherine Alderson, 11; Braylan Beltran, 11; Gifford Scott, 11; Cheri Briggs, 10; Alima Bryant, 11; Andrew, Alima Bryant's brother; Gracie Griffin, 11; Abigail Dodson, 11; Rylei Buck, 11; Nick Sprinkle, 12; Kendall Ackerman, 11; Aubrie Camp, guest of Parker Hanshew; Hannah Mitchell, 11; Andrew Davenport, 11; McKenzie Ponitowski, 11; Carson Young, 11; Travis Marks, 11; Parker Hanshew, 11; Ben Sroufe, 11; Mrs. Darby Wheeler, school counselor; and Ms. Kristin Crowder, gifted coordinator.

Vaping: what are the dangers and concerns?

by Gavin Jarvis

According to kidshealth.org, vaping is the inhaling of a vapor created by an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette). With the popularity of vaping rising among young teens, vaping has become an epidemic.

When a vape is inhaled, the “e-liquid” or “vape juice” is heated up until it becomes a vapor which is then released into the lungs. Doesn’t sound that bad, right? It’s just smoke that occupies the lungs for a little bit. Wrong. There are many negative health risks that come with the use of a vape.

The most addictive and consequential health risk is nicotine. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug, which is most commonly found in cigarettes, including e-cigarettes. According to kidshealth.org, it is as addictive as heroin or cocaine.

The presence of nicotine in vaping is what makes it really difficult to quit. According to

kidshealth.org, withdrawal symptoms include anxiety, anger, restlessness and insomnia. Unfortunately, this isn’t enough to convince teens to avoid vaping.

Many teens experience anxiety, some worse than others. This anxiety alone can convince teens with anxiety to vape. Why?

Photo by Gavin Jarvis



According to cdc.gov, a total of 2,807 hospitalized EVALI cases or deaths have been reported to CDC from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and two U.S. territories

According to truthinitiative.org, vaping nicotine may feel good by stimulating production of the “feel good” chemical in the brain called dopamine, which

can create feelings of pleasure and relaxation.

People with anxiety see this as a way out: they can’t handle having anxiety, so the incentive of “feeling good” is their incentive to vape.

Vaping may give off that feel-good feeling, but does it help with anxiety and depression? No. According to kidshealth.org, nicotine makes anxiety and depression worse. It also affects memory, concentration, self-control and attention, especially in developing brains.

Officer Eric Allen, school resource officer, focuses more onto the trends that generations follow behind.

“Different generations have things that are popular,” said Allen. “Just like before our time kids were smoking cigarettes, stuff like that.”

The common theme here is nicotine. Nicotine is the most dangerous substance that is present in vapes or e-cigarettes, but that’s not all of the ingredients in the liquid

that is heated up in vapes.

According to lung.org, other ingredients include the following: propylene glycol, carcinogens, acrolein, diacetyl, diethylene glycol and heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, lead, cadmium, benzene and ultrafine particles, that can be inhaled deep into the lungs.

These ingredients may not sound so harmful, but when the ingredients are defined, they are much worse.

Going down the list, carcinogens. According to lung.org, carcinogens are cancer causing chemicals that are actually found in traditional cigarettes, as well. Are people safer vaping than smoking cigarettes? Probably not.

According to lung.org, acrolein is a herbicide that is primarily used to kill weeds and can cause irreversible lung damage. Instead of slowly killing weeds, it slowly kills the body.

According to lung.org, diacetyl is a chemical linked

to a lung disease called bronchiolitis obliterans, otherwise known as "popcorn lung." According to mycleavelandclinic.org, there is no cure.

According to lung.org, diethylene glycol is a toxic chemical used in antifreeze that is linked to lung disease. According to valvolineglobal.com, a car related website, antifreeze is a colored liquid that is mixed with water to help regulate the engine of a car during extreme temperatures.

According to lung.org, cadmium, an element on the periodic table, is a toxic metal found in traditional cigarettes that causes breathing problems and disease.

According to lung.org, benzene is a volatile organic compound found in car exhaust. Why would anyone ever want to put a gas that pollutes the air into their bodies?

After looking more in depth with the ingredients that are present in vaping, there still isn't a complete

understanding of what vaping has to offer. Since vaping is more of a recent trend, there are still unknown chemicals that are floating around in the liquid.

"The thing that worries me is we really don't know what kind of chemicals are really in it and what are the long term effects," said Allen.

Another problem with vaping while being so young are the legal consequences that come with it. If you are caught vaping under the legal age, you could be fined, have to do community service, take classes and take a drug test.

"It's really a lot involved to it," said Allen. "It's really hard for them to deal with that as well as their parents taking off time to go run them around to these places."

Whether it be anxiety, popularity, or the "feel good" aspect of vaping, vaping is dangerous. If you are struggling with vaping and want to quit, go to www.thetruth.com to take the next steps to live happy, healthy and vape-free.

Treating people kindly is important no matter who they are

by Shaquira McKoy

It's critical to treat disabled individuals with respect. This is important because they are not only human beings deserving of respect, but also because it's the right thing to do. Respecting disabled people implies acknowledging their rights and abilities, as well as providing them with opportunities to live fulfilling lives.

When we treat disabled people with dignity, we affirm their values in our society. We recognize that they have unique perspectives to offer and something to contribute to the world. We're also sending a message that we accept them for who they are and are willing to collaborate to find solutions that work for everyone.

We live in a society where people are judged for who they are, and if they appear to have flaws, those flaws tend to define the person. People with disabilities should not be judged solely on the basis of their disabilities.

Our society has come a long

way in accepting people with disabilities, but we still have a long way to go because harsh judgment exists. We must be able to live in a society in which people accept others for who they are and assist those who may require assistance or guidance due to a disability, particularly children.

We are all one, and just because they are different, it does not imply that they are not a part of society or that they cannot make a positive difference in the world.

I believe our society has come a long way in accepting those who have impairments. I also believe that we have a long way to go.

My cousin Daniel has Down Syndrome. I've seen both the good and the bad in how children with Down Syndrome are accepted and/or treated.

Daniel does not speak, but his school has done an excellent job of teaching him to communicate using sign language over the years, and he has recently begun using a

speech generating device.

It is important to remember that disabled individuals are people just like everyone else. Always treat every individual with respect, and treat others how you would want to be treated, regardless of our differences.

I wish we could all have such open, caring hearts. Why do we have such a skewed perspective on disabled people in our society? Why should we be afraid of things that aren't "normal" for us? Being impaired does not make any individual any less of a person. Because someone has a disability, they may have to work harder to do something that appears to come naturally to everyone else.

Nobody will ever be "perfect," so society has no reason to promote the notion that anyone can be. Every one of us is flawed in some way. Our flaws are what distinguish us and define who we are.

Get Prepared: Senior Prom & After Prom

As the school year comes to an end, seniors are preparing for Prom. Senior class sponsors Ms. Jamie Smith, geometry/SPED teacher, and Mrs. Gretchen Galderise, geometry teacher, have decided on the location and date of this year's Prom. Senior Prom 2023 will be held on Saturday, May 20, at 7 p.m. at the Appomattox Event Center in Petersburg, Va. After Prom will take place at Swader's at the end of the dance. The theme of After Prom will be "Bright Lights! Hollywood Nights!" Be sure to start preparing for the magical night that's ahead.



\$5 dress sale at the James River Junior Woman's Club

THE JAMES RIVER JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB
PRESENTS:

Say Yes to the Dress!

**When: March 30 6:00 - 8:30pm
April 2 2:00 - 5:00pm**

**Where: First Baptist Church
401 N 2nd Street Hopewell, VA 23860
Between The Beacon Theater and Tri City ER**

ALL dresses are \$5!
All are welcome to attend
(Prince George, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, Chester, and Local private schools, etc.)
We also have a few suits as well so gentlemen feel free to come take a look.
We hope to see you there!

A photograph of several dresses hanging on a rack, showing various styles and colors.