

March 2024

Colonial Courier

Colonial Heights High School

Photo by Terri Miles Moody



Juniors and their dates celebrated the receiving of their class rings on Saturday, March 23. This year's dance theme was Down on the Bayou. See the full story about Ring Dance and pictures on pages 2-5.



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Ring Dance traditions continue

by Neleigh Rexroad and Addison Tant

Most other local schools hold a combined junior-senior prom, but CHHS continues its decades-long tradition of hosting Ring Dance for juniors to celebrate receiving their class rings.

The theme for this year's dance, which was on March 23, was "Down on the Bayou." Class of 2025 sponsors Ms. Kristin Crowder, gifted resources coordinator, and Mrs. Darby Wheeler, counselor, oversaw all dance preparations.

The gym was decorated with lily pads, Spanish moss and a dock that led students to the giant, wooden class ring. In the hallway the sponsors had a food table with snacks that matched the theme's colors.

The sponsors, students and parents spent over a week transforming the gym into a bayou setting.

"I liked spending time with students I normally wouldn't spend time with or with students I do interact with in a

Photo by Terri Miles Moody



Among the photo opportunities at Ring Dance was an elaborate balloon arch in the hallway outside of the gym. Pictured here are Fletcher Grubb, 10, Justis Merriman, 11, Destiny Childs, 11, and Rylee Lundie, 11.

different way while decorating," said Mrs. Wheeler.

Prior to the dance, class officers and sponsors were asked about how they envisioned the dance going.

"The Class of 2025 is special to me because I know a lot about the kids and watching them grow up has been really fun," said Mrs. Wheeler, who chose to sponsor the class of 2025 because her son Declan Wheeler is a junior.

The Class of 2025 class officers were also very excited leading up to the dance. Justis

Merriman, junior class president, said she was excited about "dressing up and hanging out with my friends."

Piper Howison, junior class vice president, said she was excited for "the dance floor" because "it's supposed to be draped like the night sky."

Merriman said the reason they picked the bayou theme was because they "wanted something that would go with someone's liking."

"There were no other themes that they were thinking about," said Howison.



Leland Belcher, 11, Kaycie Dixon, 11, and Rachel Walker, 10, take a break from the music and dancing in the gym to refuel on cucumber or lime water.

The dance itself was the focal point of the night, but many enjoyed getting together with dates and friends to take pictures and go out to dinner and looked forward to receiving the class rings they had designed and ordered.

Brittany Slattery, 11, went to

Ring Dance with her boyfriend. They took pictures and went out to dinner before the dance.

"I am getting a class ring because I want something to remember my high school career," said Slattery.

Allyson Cobb, 11, took

pictures and went to the dance with one of her friends. She was looking forward to the dance, but she was specifically excited to get dressed up and have fun. Cobb also got a class ring because she thinks it's an important part of her high school career.

Keirstyn Barlow, 11, chose to go to Ring Dance because she's "only a junior once and it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Some juniors were less enthusiastic.

Connor Hollie, 11, chose not to go because he "does not like to dress up." However, he also said, "The Ring Dance still seems like a great opportunity."

All of the time-honored traditions of Ring Dance occurred. Juniors and their escorts were announced, juniors received their rings from their escorts, juniors danced the first dance with their parents, and then the DJ turned up the music after the parents left.

Shanii Lewis, 11, enjoyed all aspects of the night, but a highlight was spending time

with her boyfriend.

“My absolute favorite part of the night was when they played ‘Tennessee Whiskey’ and I got to experience my very first slow dance with my boyfriend,” said Lewis.

Brandon Scheivert also enjoyed special time with his date.

“Ring Dance was special because I got to spend it with my girlfriend, just being able to have a good time and dance to the music,” said Scheivert. “The decorations were nice. It was a good theme and a good environment.”

Both Lewis and Scheivert appreciate the time and work the sponsors dedicated to make the night special for the Class of 2025.

“I could tell that they put a lot of effort and thought into the decorations,” said Lewis. “Everything came together

Photo by Terri Miles Moody



Terrell Copeland, 10, and Kaesaun Everett, 10, attended Ring Dance as guests of juniors.

nicely. Even though our class sponsors were struggling to find people to help decorate

during the week, they made the night magical for us.”

Class of 2025 Ring Dance



Barefoot postpones retirement for new position

by Gavin Jarvis

After 29 years of teaching, Mrs. Dana Barefoot, chemistry teacher, has decided that it's time to hang up the lab coat. She's not retiring; she's stepping in as the CHPS family resource coordinator.

"I felt like it was time for a change," said Mrs. Barefoot. "I still love classroom education, and I enjoy it, but I felt it was that I was being drawn to also helping parents."

Mrs. Barefoot entered the Colonial Heights classroom after tutoring to supplement her family's income after her husband's recent job loss and found her passion for teaching.

"I realized I had a passion for high school students, and when there was a position available in the science department, I applied for the position, and without having that new teaching background, they gave me the job," said Mrs. Barefoot.

Mrs. Barefoot first worked at a pharmaceutical company

Photo courtesy of Dana Barefoot



Mrs. Barefoot has a husband, two daughters, two sons-in-law and three grandchildren.

for six years after graduating from East Carolina University with a Bachelor's of Science in Biochemistry.

"I've always been very interested in the synthesis of positive drugs to be used towards ailments," said Mrs. Barefoot. "I just felt like this would give me a good chance to see the actual process prior to going through the FDA approval."

She then worked four years at a tobacco company as a chemist to research additives on tobacco progress right before coming to CHHS.

"Colonial Heights attracted me for two reasons," said

Mrs. Barefoot. "One, I had two small children and I didn't want to drive far away, and I lived in Colonial Heights. I have lived here my entire life."

As a new teacher, Mrs. Barefoot struggled a bit because it had been 10 years since she took a chemistry course or a biology course.

"I pretended like I was holding a piece of paper," said Mrs. Barefoot, "where really I was trying to read the answers off the paper as I was teaching."

Mrs. Barefoot found her footing the more she taught because she was able to learn

the information along with her students as she taught it. Her passion for chemistry also comes with her passion for her students.

"I am passionate about students loving chemistry, but I have to be realistic and realize not everybody's going to love it," said Mrs. Barefoot. "I want them to know that something that is a challenge can still be successful for you as a person, no matter what you're doing."

Makenzie Gilgannon, 11, was in Mrs. Barefoot's Chemistry 1 class last semester. She appreciates Mrs. Barefoot's determination for her students.

"Mrs. Barefoot went above and beyond for not only me but the students in my class," said Gilgannon. "She never wanted anyone to feel left behind in our work."

Mrs. Barefoot has helped Gilgannon as a student and a human by teaching life lessons.

"She cares about her students outside of her classroom as well as in class," said Gilgannon.

Another student, Leo He, 12, had Mrs. Barefoot in Chemistry 1 and AP Chemistry. He recognizes that she has a lot of passion for what she teaches and her students through the help

that he has received.

"Whenever I needed help to understand something for AP Chemistry, she was always there ready to help me understand as much as possible," said He.

Throughout the class, the way Mrs. Barefoot taught the chemistry curriculum interested him and kept him engaged each day.

"She made everything we learned about genuinely interesting and made me want to learn more about the world of chemistry," said He.

Throughout her years of teaching, Mrs. Barefoot has accomplished a lot. Mrs. Betsy Johnson, school counselor, has been right beside her.

"She has been chosen as the Senior of the Month teacher representative numerous times, so it's always so awesome to see her recognized in that way and what the kids have to say about her," said Mrs. Johnson.

Mrs. Barefoot has been recognized as the CHHS Teacher of the Year twice and the CHPS Division Teacher of

Photo courtesy of Dana Barefoot



Being a grandparent has made Mrs. Barefoot realize that there are a number of grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. In her new position as CHPS family resource coordinator, she plans to offer support and resources to these grandparents.

the Year. She has also been chosen to speak at the NHS/BETA induction numerous times.

Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Barefoot have been friends since before they became colleagues. They met each other through their husbands, who were both going to the same college at the time. Eventually, they found each other both working at Colonial Heights.

"I was already working here, and then she was hired," said Mrs. Johnson. "Because we already have that connection through our husbands, we became, you know, better friends through working here."

Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Barefoot have participated in many school activities together, one being SODA sponsors.

"One of the first things we did together was we sponsored SODA together," said Mrs. Johnson. "I think that's where we got to know each other really well and each other's quirks."

Throughout the years, their

friendship grew, and they became closer, as well as their families.

"She's even been such a good support for my own kids," said Mrs. Johnson. "She's just got that natural ability to help, and she gives 100 percent to everything she does."

Mrs. Johnson approached

Photo courtesy of Dana Barefoot



When she is not working at one of her two jobs, Mrs. Barefoot often spends time with her family, including her two daughters Sarah and Rachel.

going into, it's just got her name written all over it."

As the family resource coordinator, Mrs. Barefoot will be working with a variety of people, like parents and grandparents, to provide resources to help their children be academically successful within the school division.

"Now that I'm a grandparent, I realized there are a number of grandparents that are raising their grandchildren," said Mrs. Barefoot. "I just think I would like to be able to educate them and our community as well."

Mrs. Barefoot is currently working part-time in her new position while she finishes her last semester as a teacher. While juggling two jobs, she already has a few goals she is working toward as the new family resource coordinator.

"I really want to focus on parent involvement again," said Mrs. Barefoot. "I feel like parents have become less and less involved within the school system, and I really

want to get parents back involved."

She also wants to focus on support groups for families, students, parents and grandparents, especially those who are raising special education students.

"A lot of them feel alone when they're raising a child that is either intellectually or developmentally delayed or disabled," said Mrs. Barefoot. "You want to make sure that they can see that there's so many people out there going through the same thing."

Mrs. Barefoot is grateful to her students and co-workers for giving her a reason to love her job and being a part of her family as she transitions to a new chapter in her life.

"Thank you for making me grow as a person," said Mrs. Barefoot. "Thank you for making me a caring and loving individual for the needs that you all had, and I wanted to be there for you. Thank you for helping me love a job for 29 years."

"For my co-workers and friends that I have grown to feel like they're my family,

thank you for the help, love and support you have given me through this whole time that I have been here," said Mrs. Barefoot.

At the end of the school year, Mrs. Barefoot will say farewell to teaching as she transitions to working full time in her new position.

"Mrs. Barefoot is a legendary teacher, who is loved by her students, colleagues and community," said Mr. James Burnett, assistant principal. "I personally know her passion for her subject area and her genuine love of students and teaching as she was my chemistry teacher at CHHS. She will be dearly missed. Although we will greatly miss her, she is continuing to serve students, families, and the CH community in her new role as the CHPS family resource coordinator."

"Her love and passion for students and teaching will live on with the students that she served and her colleagues that she worked alongside each day," said Mr. Burnett. "We wish her all the best in the future."

Henry honored as Feb. Senior of the Month

by Abby Emory, and Nassara Kolor, and Aleena Williams

“Kristina has a wonderful personality,” said Mr. Mickey Alderson, art teacher. “She is very talented and gifted in art, but she is also well-rounded. Kriss is athletic, smart, kind and caring. She has a bright future, and I cannot wait to see what wonderful things she will accomplish in the future.”

Kristina “Kriss” Henry, 12, found out that she was given the honor of being Senior of the Month when she got called down to the main office to see Mr. Mike Nelson, principal.

“It was weird because I didn’t think I was in trouble, of course, but I knew it was something important if he had to talk to me about it,” said Henry.

Henry has been praised many times for her amazing artwork. For most of her pieces, she gets inspiration from her life.

“Kriss has created her

Photo by Aleena Williams



For her English 12 service learning project, Henry created a painting that she donated to the school. Her painting now hangs in the newly-renovated counseling office. She plans to study art in the fall at N.C. State.

unique style/theme that shines brightly through each piece of artwork she creates,” said Mr. Alderson.

“My family are my biggest motivators, mostly my

brother,” said Henry. Seeing her brother succeed makes Henry want to succeed, as well.

Henry has played volleyball and basketball and is now



In addition to studying and practicing art, Henry plays both basketball and volleyball. She hopes to continue to play volleyball in college.

managing soccer; she's been captain of the basketball team since her sophomore year.

One of the biggest challenges of her high school career was being a student-athlete while also managing her artwork. Although Henry has played basketball, she values volleyball the most.

"I've gotten to make a lot of

friendships that I probably wouldn't have had," said Henry.

Henry's athletic abilities have led her to be desired on teams.

"She is a phenomenal athlete and can be pushed to greater lengths than the average student-athlete," said Mrs. Toni Martin, girls' volleyball coach.

Many students aren't ready

to graduate as they fear starting the next chapter of their lives; however, Henry is ready. She has expressed that she is ready to a new adventure.

"I'm actually really excited," said Henry. "I'm ready to start studying art and move on to start something new," said Henry.

After graduating high school, Henry plans to go to N.C. State to study art and design. She also hopes to continue her volleyball career.

"Kriss is a great player because she is incredibly athletically gifted," said Mrs. Martin. "We tried to find things that would push her athletically, and she met and exceeded everything we offered."

"Kriss is a great team player because no matter how she, personally, felt about her playing on any given night, she was always there to support and uplift others," said Mrs. Martin. "We always knew that as long as Kriss was smiling, we were in business."

Gibson puts his spin on a new hobby

by Seth Jackson

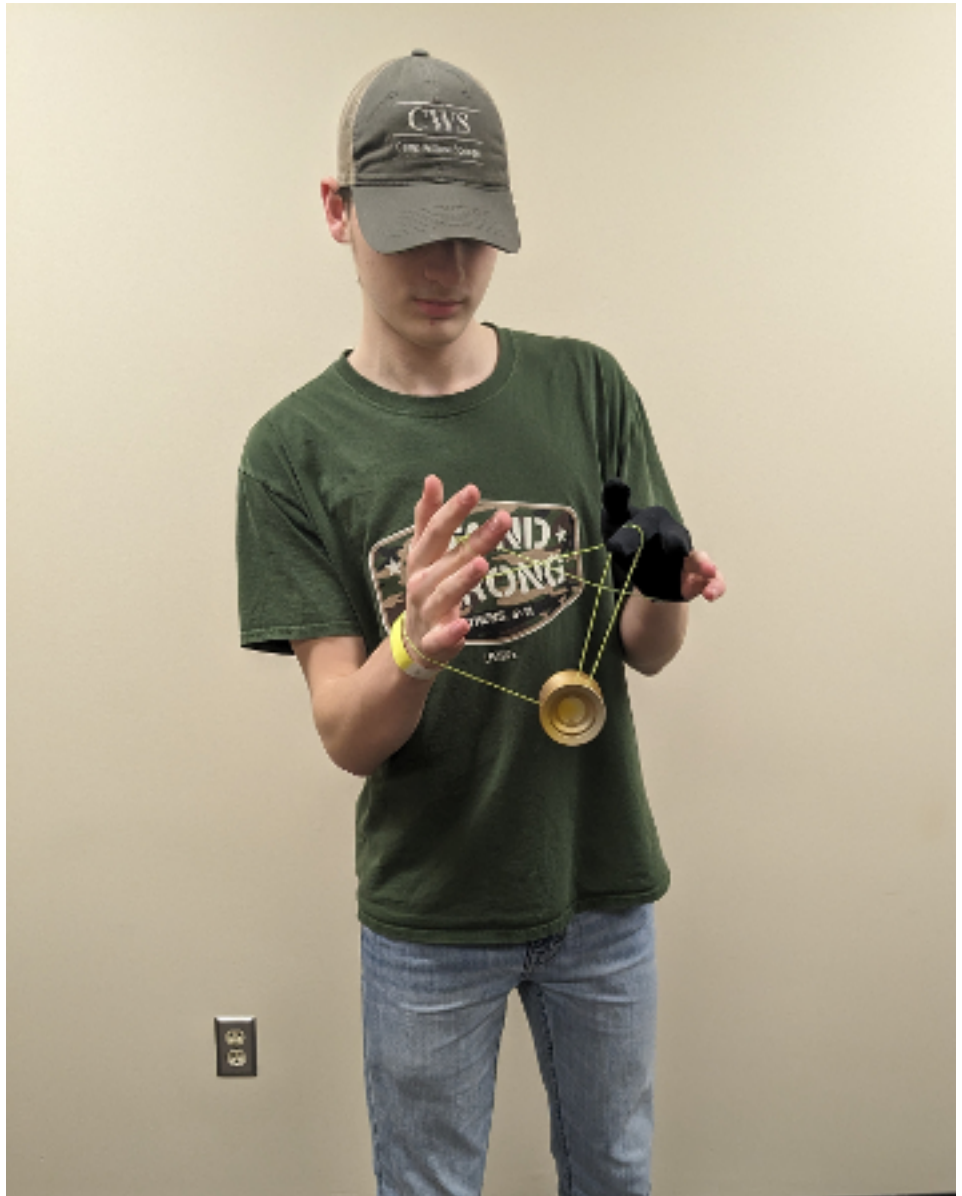
Photo courtesy of Josiah Gibson

Spectators and on-lookers catch a glimpse of a young man doing all sorts of yo-yo tricks and skills at their local library. Word quickly spread of this display and soon began circulating in the CHHS community.

Josiah Gibson, 10, the source of this unique entertainment, makes great use of his free time yo-yoing whenever he can.

"I yo-yo at the tech [center]. . . and at the library mainly to pass time because I'll be there for at least two hours most days," said Gibson, "but sometimes it can get windy and can mess up some of my tricks."

While he is capable of becoming a performer because of his impressive ability, he mostly keeps yo-yoing as more of a hobby to lose himself in during free time.



Gibson demonstrates a trick called the magic trick.

"It's more of a casual thing," said Gibson. "I would like to learn a lot of advanced stuff, but right now, it is more casual. It's not really what I want my career to be. If I have nothing to do, yo-yoing can fill that free time."

Gibson also does not necessarily label himself as a performer or entertainer for the general public.

"[I don't] usually [perform] in public. My best friend, Matthew Wood, does, though," said Gibson. "[We] go to a summer

camp every year, and there is a talent show. He went into the talent show and has done that before. I haven't. This is a youth camp for my church, The Heights Baptist."

enjoyment in teaching Gibson new tricks and tips. He even remarked on Gibson's quick growth.

"When Josiah started practicing with a yo-yo, I was surprised but happy to

new tricks," said Wood. "Many of the tricks in his arsenal he learned on his own; however, I really enjoy sharing the techniques and knowledge I've learned over the past couple years."

While learning under his friend, Gibson also actively practices new tricks and skills from an online, instructive app.

"There is an app called Yo-Yo Tricks, which has a ton of tricks you can learn," said Gibson. "They also give very detailed instructions on how to actually do them."

Photo courtesy of Josiah Gibson



The entrance to the Colonial Heights Public Library, where Gibson can be seen practicing and demonstrating yo-yo tricks and techniques.

Gibson further stated that Wood has inspired him to learn how to yo-yo and supports him through his tutelage.

"I saw him do it, and I said, 'You have to teach me,'" said Gibson. "So, I ordered a pack of two yo-yos, and now, he is still teaching me. He's 90 percent of my support."

Wood takes pride and

have someone to practice with," said Wood. "He started off strong, learning a lot of tricks in a short amount of time. I think he has progressed a lot faster than I did."

Wood also appreciates that Gibson has acquired skills that Wood has learned during his time yo-yoing.

"I love teaching Josiah

The app and his friend have allowed Gibson to rapidly learn new skills and enhance his dexterous capabilities.

"I can do a lot of beginner to intermediate tricks," said Gibson. "There is one trick called the DNA, which is a really popular trick. As one might think, when it's performed, it looks like a strand of DNA."

"There's one called space jam that I am still learning, and there's another one called slingshot GT," said Gibson. "Those are both performed by world champions."

Gibson also expressed his interest in the many styles of yo-yoing that have developed over the years.

"There are definitely many different styles of yo-yoing," said Gibson. "The yo-yoing I usually do is called 1A or 1 unresponsive yo-yo. Traditionally with yo-yos, when you throw it down and tug, it comes back up. With unresponsive yo-yos, it doesn't do that. Some tricks are only able to happen with unresponsive yo-yos."

Gibson also offered more information on another style he would like to eventually add to his collection.

"There is even one style where the yo-yo is fully off of the string," said Gibson. "Performers have to catch

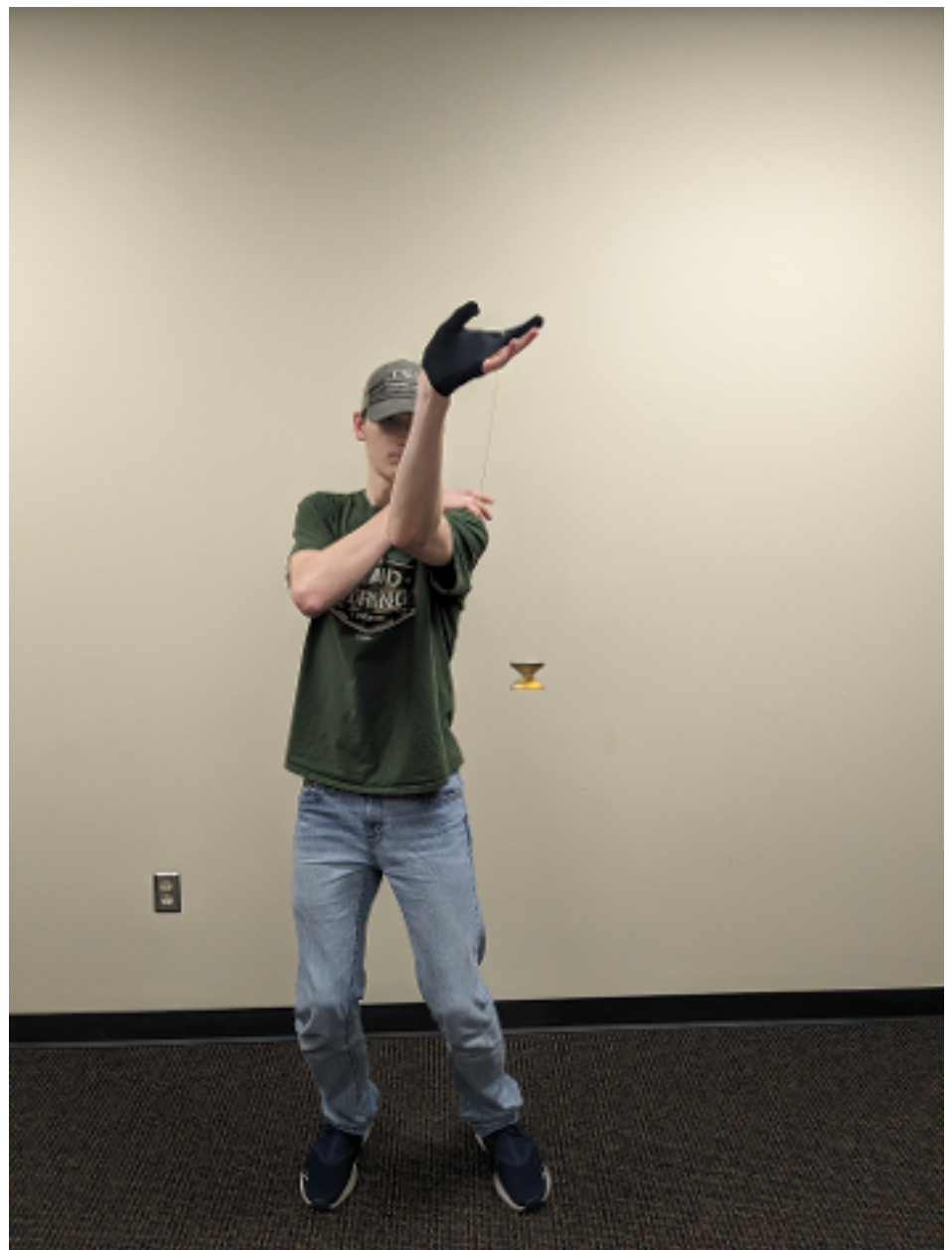
it on the string, and it's incredibly difficult because it can get stuck or they can miss it. I definitely want to learn that."

Gibson finds himself sharing his hobby with others throughout his daily classes, especially at the

tech center.

"When Josiah entered my Tech Transfer class, he immediately showed initiative and drive to work," said Mr. Matthew Tyrell, Tech Transfer teacher. "When he was done with his assignments,

Photo courtesy of Josiah Gibson



Gibson demonstrates a trick called the space jam.

he would always pull out his yo-yo and would perform tricks like it was nothing."

Mr. Tyrell offered greater insight into Gibson's character through his interactions with class assignments.

"During 3D Printing week, I had asked the class to create their own object to print," said Gibson. "When Josiah created his yo-yo, he would always keep me up to date on how he was planning on doing it. I was impressed with his enthusiasm in wanting to create something relating to his hobby."

Gibson shared his yo-yo experience with the class and gave students the opportunity to attempt some yo-yo tricks.

"His classmates would swear they could do it, too," said Mr. Tyrell. "Josiah allowed some of them to try, and they could not. The

other students were amazed at how he was able to do it with such ease."

Gibson's family also offers their support toward his yo-yoing hobby by being a part of his audience.

"My sister, Melodie Gibson, who graduated from Colonial Heights High School, supports me," said Gibson. "Sometimes when I learn a new trick, I would show her."

Mrs. Christina Martinez, Gibson's mother, offered another perspective.

"I was very surprised and impressed that he had learned to do this," said Mrs. Martinez. "He seemed to have picked it up very quickly, and he really enjoys doing it. Josiah has really good hand-eye coordination, and this skill, I think, will help keep his mind sharp and alert. I think this may come in handy in his future."

Mrs. Martinez expressed her gratitude towards yo-yoing, and other hobbies that positively influence today's youth.

"As a parent, I'm thankful to see my kids take part in activities that are challenging and constructive," said Martinez. "There are too many other things in this world that have a negative impact on young people. It's a breath of fresh air to see kids excited about something that appears to be so simple."

Gibson summarized his experiences thus far and encourages others to try something new.

"When I first started yo-yoing, the tricks I'm doing now, I never thought I would be able to do," said Gibson. "I would say that if you think you cannot do something, you should try it. You can definitely do it over time."

Harrison follows family volunteering tradition

by Savannah Stephenson

Many people are born into their family's traditions, like the Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving or a vacation to the beach every spring break, but Carleigh Harrison, 10, and family have a more meaningful tradition. Harrison and her family regularly participate in the Special Olympics.

"I've never known life without it," said Harrison, 10, whose grandmother got her involved at an early age. "I've been doing this since I was four years old."

The Special Olympics was founded in the early 1960s. Eunice Kennedy Shriver, President John F. Kennedy's sister, noticed that people with intellectual disabilities were treated unfairly, so she decided to make a change. The Special Olympics was founded on Aug. 2, 1968, in Washington D.C., for the athletes to be able to fairly compete in events.

"Special Olympics are so

much more than just special needs people doing sports," said Harrison. "We're a family, same as any other sports team out there."

Harrison along with her family, participated, in the Polar Plunge on Jan. 3 to raise money for the Special Olympics. The Polar Plunge is a fundraising event for athletes, coaches, volunteers and anyone else that wants to participate to jump into the freezing cold Atlantic Ocean to raise money.

"I don't think people get how cold it really is," said Harrison. "It's so cold that it burns your skin to the point where you want to go back in because it feels right."

The athletes of the Special Olympics have many options to choose from when picking an event. There are fall, winter, spring and summer events that offer many sports. Harrison regularly volunteers her time to help coach these events.

"Soccer is one of the more

Photo courtesy of Carleigh Harrison



Harrison and her family participated in the Polar Plunge in January in Virginia Beach. Some participants of the annual event, which raises funds for the Special Olympics, enter a costume contest. Harrison and her family dressed as Wizard of Oz characters.

popular sports in the Special Olympics, and I had so much fun that it made me try out for the team here,” said Harrison.

Ms. Kristina Adams, SPED teacher, is also an enthusiastic participant of the Special Olympics. Her brother, Tony, who got her into the games, enjoys many aspects of these events, from the competition to the parties.

“Tony loves being around the people,” said Ms. Adams. “It’s great network of people, like a family.”

Ms. Adams genuinely enjoys taking time out of her day to

volunteer in the games and other activities. The relationships that she has built with the other volunteers and athletes are some that can never be broken.

“You feel it,” said Ms. Adams. “You feel the positivity, the love, and it’s just a good feeling to be a part of it.”

Harrison’s grandmother is the area coordinator for Area 16 (Colonial Heights) and has built up the local Special Olympics events over the last 20 years. She held a Snowflake Ball that is similar to Prom on Jan. 20 for the athletes.

“My aunt took a special needs student to her prom, and my grandmother just fell in love with that student, which is what started all of this,” said Harrison.

Harrison continues to look forward to her next opportunity to be able to coach or to participate in her next event. Her love and enjoyment for these events only gets stronger as she gets older.

“The Special Olympics has been my whole life,” said Harrison. “It’s just what I’ve sort of always known, and I wouldn’t trade it for the world.”

Photo courtesy of Carleigh Harrison



Area 16 Special Olympics Polar Plungers, athletes and families gathered in the hotel lobby before the plungers ran into the cold waters at Virginia Beach in January. Harrison has participated in the Polar Plunge almost every year since she was five years old. Even during the closures of COVID-19, Harrison and her family plunged locally at White Bank Park in plastic kiddie pools.

Crowder serves in many roles at CHHS

by Julianna Sheridan

What would CHHS do without Ms. Kristin Crowder, gifted resource coordinator?

“Well, I honestly do not know what CHHS would do without Ms. Crowder. She works an endless amount of hours to make sure that students at CHHS are given as many opportunities as possible,” said Mrs. Tara Seely, school guidance counselor. “She wears many hats and takes on many roles, and when I think of our school, Ms. Crowder is the epitome of what it means to have Colonial Pride.”

Ms. Crowder takes on many responsibilities at the school, such as NHS sponsor, Impact sponsor and Class of 2025 sponsor. She also plans activities, like college field trips and fall and spring orientation programs.

Ms. Crowder has dedicated many years of her life to get to the position she is now. She worked six years of her career at CHMS, where she taught physical science, and

Photo by Julianna Sheridan



Ms. Kristin Crowder's official title is gifted resource coordinator; however, she coordinates many projects outside of her job description.

another 23 years at CHHS, where she started out teaching Biology 1 and 2 and then moved to the position she is in now.

“Ms. Crowder’s dedication to students’ success, commitment to excellence and willingness to help colleagues adapt to challenging situations is a huge plus to the school,” said Mr. Mike Nelson, principal.

Many of the roles Ms. Crowder has taken on have been by her own choice. She isn’t required to do all these

jobs, but it is important to her because she wants to make CHHS feel like a more comfortable place for students and staff.

“Ms. Crowder is constantly trying to think of new ways to get kids involved and enjoy school more,” said Mrs. Laurie Melis, Spanish teacher. “She also is always looking for ways to improve the school.”

Everything Ms. Crowder does for the school takes lots of time and planning. Much of her time is devoted to her sponsoring of the NHS.

Photo courtesy of Kristin Crowder



As gifted resources coordinator, Ms. Crowder works alongside the counseling team. Pictured left to right (back row): Ms. Pam Morgan, counseling secretary; Mrs. Tara Seely, counselor; Ms. Crowder; Ms. Deona Guy, counselor; (front row) Mrs. Betsy Johnson, counseling department head; Mrs. Darby Wheeler, counselor.

“With NHS we do a lot of volunteer work and give back to the community,” said Ms. Crowder. “We have tried to do a lot of big projects, like Pink Out and Volunteer-a-Thon.”

NHS is not the only organization she spends her time on. Being the co-sponsor of the Class of 2025 is also very important to her.

“This is my third full class that I have sponsored, and one class I picked up half way through,” said Ms. Crowder. “You get to know the class very well, so they become

kind of like your babies, and every person is a member of a class, so it's not something like a club.”

The time Ms. Crowder puts into her work shows just how dedicated she is to her job. She spends lots of her free time at the school working to put projects together.

“If I figure out something that will maybe work as a solution to a problem, I will try it,” said Ms. Crowder. “I am willing to work for it. I'm not just going to be like, ‘okay this is a problem.’ I will work

for it.”

Ms. Crowder is driven by her desire to fix problems she sees. Once she finds something wrong, she cannot find it in her to just leave it be.

“I have this thing where I just like to make things better and solve problems,” said Ms. Crowder. “When I see a problem, I just can't let it go.”

Even though Ms. Crowder already does so much for the school, she still feels like she could be doing even more. Attendance is something many students struggle with, but Ms. Crowder works every day trying to figure out ways to get students to want to be in school.

“Attendance is such a problem right now, and we are trying to improve the students' attendance,” said Ms. Crowder. “I don't have the answer for that yet, but I have some ideas.”

Not only does Ms. Crowder have a working life, but also she has a family life with two children. Both of her kids are older and living on their own, which gives her even more

time to dedicate to her job.

“I have two grown boys,” said Ms. Crowder. “I am also friends with many of the teachers who work here, as well.”

With all of the good that comes with everything she does, there also comes struggles. A few of the main challenges she faces are time management and disorganization.

“There are just not enough hours in a day,” said Ms. Crowder. “Sometimes I have a challenge of disorganization. I get overwhelmed, and sometimes don't wrap up my stuff.”

There are not many people who can genuinely say they enjoy going to work every single day, but Ms. Crowder is one of those people.

“I think we have a pretty amazing school system that has so many great teachers that are willing to go the extra mile for their students, but not that many school systems are like CHHS,” said Ms. Crowder.

Ms. Crowder has made such

Photo courtesy of Kristin Crowder



Ms. Crowder spends much of her time outside of school with her family, including her two adult sons and her parents. Her older son, Mr. Jacob Crowder, teaches finance at CHHS.

a difference at CHHS. Whether that be sponsoring clubs or making school more enjoyable for students, she finds a way to do it.

“Ms. Crowder is a positive leader who consistently promotes school spirit and academic excellence within our school,” said Mrs. Kate Garrett, history teacher. “She plays an important role in inspiring our students to

work hard towards their goals and gives them the encouragement they need to reach their potential and overcome challenges.”

“Ms. Crowder is a rock star in successfully creating and implementing new ideas to promote unity among students and staff,” said Mrs. Garrett.

Student-athletes fast during Ramadan

by Samina Bbumba and Elizabeth Randolph

Fasting for long periods of time takes a lot of stamina; playing a sport while fasting takes even more. Soccer player Nassara Kolor, 10, has been fasting during Ramadan for

two years.

Ramadan, which is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, runs this year from March 10 to April 9. During this time, those who celebrate don't eat or drink from sunrise to sunset. The purpose of this ritual is to

grow spiritually and build a stronger relationship with God.

According to Brandeis University's website, "fasting is a private act of worship bringing about nearness to God, as well as a form of spiritual discipline and a means to empathize with those less fortunate."

Fasting is not required for those who are under 15, which is the age that some Muslims start fasting.

Kolor, who also plays field hockey, prepares for days with games and difficult practices by eating a high-protein breakfast in the morning before it's time to stop eating.

Kolor strives to maintain a good performance while she is fasting and feels that her coaches are supportive of that.

"My coaches know that I fast, so when the time

Photo courtesy of Aleena Williams



When Nassara Kolor, 10, fasts during soccer season, she prepares her body for the day by eating a high-protein breakfast before the sun rises.

comes, they are very understanding about how my performance can be affected," said Kolor.

Khaled Saleh, 10, also fasts during Ramadan. Saleh, who plays soccer, has been fasting for four years.

Saleh prepares before Ramadan even starts by not drinking any water during difficult practices. During his games, he will

Photo courtesy of Khaled Saleh



Khaled Saleh limits his water intake before the start of Ramadan so his body can start to adapt to the change.

break his fast during the second half of the match once the sun has set.

"Not eating or drinking may affect my performance during matches," said Saleh, "but over time I practice for the high level of intensity."

Both Saleh and Kolor credit their coaches and friends for supporting them while they are fasting and growing in their religion.

Saleh feels support from his coach, Mr. Yusef Jabri, assistant boys' varsity soccer coach, because his coach subs him out of the game when it's time to break his fast during sunset.

"My friends are very supportive and sweet when I'm fasting," said Kolor. "They always check on me so that makes it easy to make it through the days."

Kolor feels like she's not alone during Ramadan because she has friends who are very interested in what she does.

"Last year, I remember, I was fasting while we were at a game, and it was almost time to break my fast," said Kolor, "so my friends waited with me before they ate their food. Some of my friends have even tried fasting with me."

With the support that Kolor gets from others, there is support that she can give back.

"I would tell [others who are fasting] to surround themselves with the right kind of people," said Kolor. "Two of the things that makes fasting easy for me while being a student-athlete are my friends and family."

Track stars improve during seasons

by Ashy Pillai

"Sports provide opportunities for you to achieve things that are greater than yourself," said Mr. Darrell Jackson, head boys' track and field coach and CHMS health/P.E. teacher.

While being small but mighty, the track and field indoor/outdoor teams consist of multiple standouts who have risen above the school standard.

"We don't have the numbers to compete as a whole team,

so those kids we have as individuals are getting better every week," said Mr. Timothy Ralph, health/P.E. teacher, cross country and track and field coach.

The track and field indoor/outdoor team consists of standout athletes, like Kendall Ackerman 12; Kamiyah Johnson, 10; Lucas Sprinkle, 10; and Nyasia Watkins, 10.

"On this year's team Lucas Sprinkle excelled in the long and triple jumps," said Mr. Jackson. "He qualified for the

state meet this year with a fourth-place finish in the 3A Regional meet in Hampton, Va."

Sprinkle hopes to break a school record for the triple jump in the spring season for the boys' track and field team.

The girls' track team has some accomplished and determined players. Two of the players have made it to states, and one player has even broken records.

"We have Kamiyah Johnson, who has done really well and has had a good season with the long jump, triple jump and fifty-five meters," said Mr. Ralph.

Since her freshman year, Johnson has broken a 20-year-old school records and grown as a track star. She still has many goals to achieve, like going to the Olympics in the future.

"Last year when I was a freshman, I went to states," said Johnson. "I broke the school record, the 20-year-old record. I've grown a lot, and

Photo courtesy of Kendall Ackerman



Many of the track players prefer spring track over winter track due to the facilities.

one of the events I do is the triple jump. I struggled with it last year, but this year I'm doing way better."

Like Johnson, Ackerman is looking to set goals and achieve them.

"I like running and just setting goals and working to reach them," said Ackerman.

Ackerman qualified for states after winning the 3A Region 3200m run for her indoor season. She is a qualifier for states in both outdoor and indoor track. Ackerman was also a qualifier

for 3A state cross country and earned all-state honors.

Watkins also hopes to make it to states in the spring, specifically for jumping and running. Watkins missed her qualification for states in winter track due to an injury. When challenges come her way, she thinks about the example she can set for her siblings.

"Thinking about all the things I've already accomplished and showing my siblings that they can do anything if they put their

mind to it and work hard," said Watkins when asked about what she does to overcome obstacles.

Hard work and dedication are the common denominator for the success of these track stars. They all have goals they hope to achieve, and they have the desire to get better.

"When looking for/at a track and field athlete, one thing should be forthcoming ...desire," said Mr. Jackson.



Former CHHS soccer players return to coach

by Johkiya Hilliard and Priscila Machuca Sostre

From playing soccer on a high school team to coaching the same team they played on, Ms. Sarah Crinkley and Ms. Claire Hill have returned to their roots as the CHHS girls' soccer coaches.

Ms. Crinkley chose to play soccer despite her dad's wishes for her to play tennis.

"I think it was a little bit of a rebellious thing for me," said Ms. Crinkley. "My dad didn't want me to play soccer. He really wanted me to play tennis. Most of my friends were in the little league where everybody's terrible."

Ms. Crinkley wishes she had

taken practice more seriously as a player. She feels like she should've spent more time outside of school practicing because the amount of effort a player puts into practice in her free time is where she will see a change in skill.

"I would take practices more seriously. I would spend more time outside of practice practicing because in high school you think your practice is sufficient," said Ms. Crinkley, "but if you want to be a really good player, the amount of time you put in outside of practice is going to be where you really see that skill change."

Ms. Crinkley described

going from a player to a coach as a "surreal experience." During the first game she coached, she almost got too involved in the playing of the game.

"My first game as a coach, I almost actually ran out on the field because the ball was near me, and I was like, 'Oh, God, I have to play defense,'" said Ms. Crinkley.

Alexis Shutt, 11, varsity soccer player, appreciates how much Ms. Crinkley prioritizes the mental health of her players.

"Every once in a while, you'll get a text from her asking how you're doing, asking if you need help with anything in classes, or I know on game days, she sends out paragraphs reminding us to hydrate," said Shutt.

Ms. Crinkley believes that players need to be at their best -- both physically and mentally -- to perform their best.

"I don't think I ever thought about this as a player. My girls, physically, I want them

Photo by Makenzie Gilgannon



If Ms. Sarah Crinkley could relive her days as a high school soccer player, she would take team practices more seriously and train on her own outside of team practices.

to be healthy, but also I need them to mentally make sure they're taking care of themselves," said Ms. Crinkley. "I would have never in a million years thought that as a player, but as a coach, I think that's really important."

Ms. Hill, who started playing soccer at a young age, gives credit to her parents for getting her into sports.

"I'll give all credit to my parents who made me play sports when I was five," said Ms. Hill. "I don't know if I wanted to or not, but after I played the sport, I was hooked on playing soccer and then wanted to go to the next level."

Playing soccer and earning leadership roles as captains pushed her to be more outgoing, not only in soccer but also in her school life.

"I think it made me a little bit more outgoing, and I was the captain on a lot of my teams, so I felt like it made me become more of a leader outside of soccer, like either in the classroom or in college," said Ms. Hill, who played for Guilford College in

North Carolina.

Ms. Hill always knew she wanted to be a coach, but it was never set in stone. Since it worked out for her this semester, she could commit to being a coach at CHHS.

"I think I always wanted to stay involved in the game, but I was just going to see what opportunities I had available at the time," said Ms. Hill.

When asked how playing soccer helped her with coaching, Ms. Hill said she has the upper hand due to all of the tactical and technical skills being fresh on her mind.

"I think the experience definitely helps me with coaching because I have played for so long and I've watched a lot of soccer. I know a lot about technical, tactical, and all the things that you would need to know," said Ms. Hill. "I think I still have a lot to learn, but playing in college definitely gave me an upper hand to coach here because it's fresh on my mind and I just left."

As a player, Ms. Hill didn't give much thought to the importance of respect;

Photo by Makenzie Gilgannon



Ms. Hill believes her time as a college soccer player taught her skills that help her in her role as a high school soccer coach.

however, as a coach, she realizes how significant respect between players and coaches is.

"It's a big thing I'm going to be focused on with the girls this year," said Ms. Hill.

Overall, Ms. Crinkley describes working with Ms. Hill and Mrs. Misty Gunder, the third coach, as a fun experience. She has a great coaching team, and they all make coaching easier for her.

"So having a really good group of coaches makes coaching fun and explaining things easier. The workload for me as the head coach is less because everybody gets stationed. Everybody's contributing," said Ms. Crinkley. "I think we have a really good culture, and that's why the girls like it."

Opinion: How field trips are beneficial

by Teresa Forehand

Some people think of school field trips as a waste of time or money. As there may be a minor fee, I guarantee that a field trip is no waste of time. Many students are oblivious to the field trip opportunities their school offers. They are missing out on not only fun trips but also career opportunities, eye-opening experiences and multiple learning skills.

Field trips give students the

opportunity to enhance critical thinking skills. We live in a world that's continuously evolving and building tough competition in almost every domain of our lives. The job opportunities that we access now didn't all exist 10 years back. Furthermore, there will be new and more dimensions of working opportunities 10 years later, and it's important to prepare students to meet future challenges. Alas, the local curriculum and fewer resources limit the teachers

from introducing their students to real-life and soft skills. Therefore, field trips provide students with a good opportunity in that case. It helps students learn how to communicate effectively and develop problem-solving skills.

As of right now CHHS does not offer any class that teaches students about the law. Yes, we have history classes, but those don't teach students how to do legal research. We don't gain much knowledge about our rights or even how the judicial system works.

Recently I went on a "Rule of Law" field trip, and we practiced persuasive arguments, public speaking, critical thinking, teamwork, attention to detail and many other skills. On this trip I learned how certain amendments can be violated and how the judicial system decides the constitutionality of federal laws and resolves disputes about federal laws.

I learned about IRAC, which

Photo by Kristin Crowder



Upperclassmen attended the Rule of Law field trip in Chesterfield County on Feb. 13 to learn about the judicial system. Pictured left to right: (back row) Nahomi Calderon Santiago, Armando Garcia Ortega, Alexis White, Abby Emory, Logan Buck, Blanche Koudalo, Slade Jackson, Ethan Greenwald, Liz Elmore; (front row) Teresa Forehand, J.C. Curtis, Madelyn Elmore, Judge Vanessa L. Jones, Joy Osogu, Marial Reed, Dixi Lemasters, Ian Sheffield



During the field trip, a mock trial was held with four volunteers from different schools. Among the volunteers were CHHS's Alexis White and Teresa Forehand. The Honorable Cleo E. Powell presided over the mock trial.

stands for issue, rule, analysis and conclusion. The issue is what you look at first because you need to recognize and state the legal issue present by the situation. Rule is when you define the legal principle that applies to the issue. Analysis is when you discuss how the legal principle relates to the fact scenario, which is the most lengthy portion of your answer. Finally, state a conclusion based on analysis.

When I heard about the field trip at first, I was like, "Well, that sounds fun," not thinking much of it. I looked at it as a little getaway trip for the day instead of doing schoolwork. When I entered the Thomas R. Fulghum Conference Center, I was shocked at how big it was, and by "big," I don't mean a

small kind of big, but more like a professional and exalted kind of big.

There are so many careers in law you could pursue, and I, personally, well, I get flustered and freak out because I want to go into something I'll enjoy, but also something that will benefit my future. Every day felt like I was losing more and more sight of what I wanted to set myself with.

On this Rule of Law field trip, after the speakers spoke about their lives, what made them want to do what they do, and what inspired them, we did what they called a "mock trial." Basically, it's a fake case going on trial, and there are six volunteers along with the honorable Cleo E.

Powell, justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia, leading us.

I'm sitting in my seat as they ask for volunteers, and I'm just enamored by their determination and work, so, of course, my hand is one of the first to shoot up. "Pick me, please, pick me," whispering to myself excitedly but nervously. That's when Judge Vanessa L. Jones, with her dazzling smile, pointed at me, and I forgot my hand was raised. All of a sudden my stomach sinks to my feet, and I'm full of butterflies as I'm walking to the back of the stage; meanwhile, students from completely different schools are being picked.

The case is explained to us before we go up on stage. Five other volunteers and I are required to agree if the law is constitutional or unconstitutional. The defender and prosecutor both get five minutes to argue their side. Now, if you're like me: "What in the world is a prosecutor?" Well, I caught on pretty quickly due to the eligibility of a field trip. Our job as volunteers was to ask questions. For example,

the prosecutor argued that “schools are fully eligible to make by-laws.” Before she kept on with her argument, I interfered and said, “Yes, schools are completely capable of publishing by-laws, but does this mean to strip students of their human rights?”

At first, I was nervous and felt like I was going to say the wrong thing, but, eventually, I realized that this isn't just a fun little field trip: I'm actually learning something beneficial and using skills I didn't even know existed in myself. Eventually, I became very comfortable asking questions.

I had felt so overwhelmed by the fact that I had only one more school year left for me to figure out what I wanted to do with myself. Every day was a new twist and turn. “Oh I want to go to college first!” “Wait, I want to have experience. Maybe I should work a job.” “I would love to go into real estate, but there's so much I don't know about it.”

Photo by Alexis White



Emerging with a new confidence in their understanding of the law, the field trip participants celebrated the end of the day with a quick selfie.

Going on this field trip for me was more than fun. It was educational, inspiring, eye-opening and so enjoyable. There were many intelligent, kind and optimistic people surrounding me, and it made me feel so secure and set on what I wanted to do with myself.

Walking out of the conference center really opened my mind to going to law school to become a lawyer. I mean, honestly, it's been one of those options that I throw around here and there with my “maybe I should do this or do that, or maybe I'll try this!” However, after feeling the excitement

and knowing what to expect when walking into a courtroom, it really set the bar high for me.

I feel as if to this day, if I didn't go on the field trip, I'd still be struggling, trying to figure out what I want to do with my future. Now I know exactly what I want to do when I graduate, and I'm so determined to pursue a career in law. The whole trip was absolutely exhilarating, and I would recommend any kind of field trip for students who have even the slightest interest in the topics that will be discussed. You never know what a little trip could do to positively impact your future.

Opinion: Vinyl, streaming offer different benefits

by Ethan Greenwald

Music has come a long way over the past century. The evolution of music has brought along new ways of enjoying it; nowadays, the most popular method of listening to music is by streaming, but a resurgence of vinyl seen this past decade may challenge that.

Out of 28 students surveyed, 75 percent preferred listening to music through a streaming service while 25 percent preferred listening to vinyl on a record player.

Vinyl was invented in 1930 and consists of circular plates that make certain vibrations with a record player. Vinyl became the most popular method of listening to music from the '30s up until '70s when cassettes took over, and then CDs became popular in the '80s.

Streaming, on the other hand, started in the early 2000s. Napster, the first streaming platform founded in 1999, allowed people to

Photo by Gavin Jarvis



Listening to music on vinyl provides a more genuine sound; however, vinyl doesn't offer all of the conveniences that streaming does.

share MP3 files of songs across the internet. Websites like this made it much easier for people to listen to music.

The main praise of vinyl is that it sounds more authentic and warmer than the digital alternative. Records are also able to better capture music due to analogue sound waves and certain frequencies being lost in the digital signal. While sound quality is an important factor, perhaps the greatest upside to vinyl is that you don't have to rely on your internet connection to listen

to it.

Streaming is currently the most popular way to listen to music. It's quick, easy, and, most importantly, cheap, assuming you don't have subscriptions. While vinyl may be slightly better in sound quality, streaming music is much more accessible.

"It is easier to listen through a streaming service while at school, driving or working out," said Benjamin Sroufe, 12.

The average price for a vinyl

record is \$20: that means that if you want to buy multiple records, it's going to cost quite a bit. Streaming, on the other hand, is free on several platforms, meaning that you could stream as many songs as you want whenever you

want for free.

So which is really better, vinyl or streaming? In sound quality, vinyl. In accessibility, streaming. Both are great ways of listening to your music. If you like vinyl best, great, and if you like

streaming better, that's awesome. Learn how to enjoy all different types of mediums and appreciate them, but the point is that there shouldn't be just one way to listen to music.

Do you prefer to listen to music on vinyl or through a streaming service?

28 responses

