

The River Hill Current



River Hill's student led, student read newspaper
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In this issue...



Festivities at the Best Buddies Fall Ball!



Mr. Al Gonsouland Speaks at River Hill



Athlete Feature:
Shane S. and Omar H.

Senior Crab Feast!

By Claire Burnett, The Current Co-Editor-in-Chief

On the evening of Monday, October 23, nearly 200 seniors participated in one of the most popular senior activities, one that captures the essence of Maryland, the senior crab feast. With River Hill's proximity to the Chesapeake Bay, combined with Maryland's love for crabs, the senior crab feast event is a recurring tradition at River Hill and many other Howard County high schools.

Upon entering the school, seniors could smell the distinct scent of crabs and Old Bay. They were given matching shirts with a large crab sporting the Maryland flag on the back before they began their feast. Numerous lunch tables lined the cafeteria, with paper tablecloths and piles of crabs on each table. The crab feast was so popular this year that extra tables had to be added during the event because the number of students exceeded the planned seating arrangement.

Seniors used wooden mallets, plastic knives and their hands to crack and hammer the crabs to reveal the coveted crab meat. For many students who grew up eating Maryland blue crabs, this process appeared to be second nature to them. Others, however, needed some assistance from their more experienced friends to navigate the breakdown of a crab. Despite living in Maryland, where crabs are abun-



dant, a number of students reported that they have never eaten crabs or they have only had a few in their lifetime.

Senior Sapna Joy commented, "I've only ever had crabs ten years ago so the difficulty to crack them was the same in my mind." Senior Kashvi Tiwari added "It was kind of hard because I don't have crabs often but I just got my friends to crack them for me."

For students who prefer not to, or cannot eat crabs, some other food options were provided: baked beans, macaroni and cheese, barbecue chicken, cookies, and fruit platters. It almost seemed as though students preferred the chicken over crabs, as the chicken ran out while crabs were left in abundance. Sapna remarked "My table was a big fan of the chicken and the mac and cheese was pretty good too."

After devouring crabs and other food options, many students took time to socialize and take pic-

tures with their friends in the cafeteria, which was decorated with dazzling Christmas lights.

As the event came to an end and people departed, one group held out for the entire feast, amassing an endlessly towering pile of crabs. Seniors Ben Kim, Joshua Soong, Jonathan Li, Daniel Wang, Bennett Lin, Daniel Murakami, and Orhan Tasci were part of this exceptional group. In terms of how they were able to achieve their mountainous pile, Daniel described, "I taught Orhan how to eat crabs and he turned into a beast." In turn, Orhan remarked that he was able to eat so many crabs because, "I'm a bottomless pit." Ben encapsulated the experience, adding how, "Teamwork's the dream work."

The event was a huge success and just one way that seniors are kicking off their senior year! As Kashvi summarized: "The crabs were good, we got free shirts. That's all you can ask for."

Do You Qualify for Free AP Exams?

By Lauren Shin, Staff Writer

Starting this school year, a new Maryland policy is allowing students who meet the Maryland State Department of Education College and Career Readiness standard in both English and mathematics to have free access to AP testing.

Fees will automatically not be charged to students who meet both the English and mathematics standard. Students who self-study courses will also not be invoiced for the exam fee.

To qualify, students must meet the required standardized testing scores, which can be viewed in their Canvas announcements. River Hill Testing Coordinator Mrs. Weinberg explains that students and parents can access the HCPSS Connect system's "Standardized Test Scores" tab to review their scores to

see if they qualify.

Logan Ji, a Junior, comments that he "didn't know this was a thing, but it seems like a really good opportunity. AP Tests are expensive, so I think it's nice that a lot of students will be able to qualify for a fee waiver from now on."

Junior Lauren Jee also expresses her delight, stating that she was recently told about this opportunity: "I heard from Ms. De La Mar and I was surprised because many people should be able to qualify easily."

Advanced Placement exams are \$98 each this year, a hefty price for those planning to take more than one AP exam. Many students, like Logan, plan on registering for multiple tests. Those who self-study will also be able to take on as many

subjects as they would like, without having to worry about wasting money.

Sophomore Alvin Lee adds on, "[The fee waiver] will encourage more students to take AP exams and also give them a reason to try harder on the state-regulated assessment tests."

For others, however, this new policy does not have a big impact on their future plans. Seniors tend to take less-demanding classes for their last year of high school. Accounting for senioritis, most students opt out of taking AP exams.

Senior Tegan Alewine elaborates on this, sharing that she is unsure whether she will be taking any exams for her AP courses. "I might decide to take one or two [exams], depending on how I feel

about my level of preparation, but I don't think I will be going out of my way to study as much as I did previous years," she says.

Payments for AP exams are due by November 10th. Mrs. Weinberg reiterates that "exams that are not paid for will not be ordered. Payments can be made online by paying the invoices sent through My School Bucks, or by check made out to River Hill High School. Check payments must be dropped off to my office, Room 229."

In order to cancel a registration after November 11, students must pay a late fee of \$40 per exam. Hopefully, more students will be encouraged this year to sign up for AP exams and take advantage of this great opportunity.

Best Buddies Fall Ball

By Lux Sheplee, Staff Writer

On Thursday, October 19th River Hill High School hosted a Fall Ball for the Best Buddies program. The event took place in River Hill's cafeteria, and unlike past years, the dance was open to students from other schools within Howard County. Many students joined the festivities, playing games, dancing to music and coloring with friends.



Best Buddies is a nationwide organization that was created in 1989, and the program is active in all 50 states. The mission of Best Buddies as stated on their website is to provide "One-to-One Friendship, Integrated Employment, and Leadership Development programs for individuals with and without disabilities." The Fall Ball was the first big event this year for the River Hills club, and lots of money was raised as each participant contributed \$10 to the club for a ticket.

Roo Saglebeni, also known as Mr. S, is an ALS teacher and sponsor of Best Buddies, and he put a lot of work into the event. There were string lights hung all over the cafeteria, a jumbo jenga game, jumbo connect four, cornhole and a blow up bowling set. Mr. S explained, "all the decorations and games you see came straight from my house."

Mr. Saglebeni also coor-

minated competitive games for everyone to play together. The first of these competitions was building a mummy, where everyone was split into groups and had 2 minutes to make a mummy out of one student using some toilet paper. Senior Jake Miller enjoyed this game immensely, describing, "my favorite part of the fall ball was getting to wrap Phillip up in toilet paper." Phillip was very excited as his team won by making him the best mummy.

A short time later, students tested how low they could go with a game of limbo. Fun music played as students bent in all different ways to avoid touching the toilet paper that was used in place of a limbo stick. A few siblings of students attend the event as well. Sophomore Annie Levine "enjoyed dancing with a toddler" to the limbo music.

The Fall Ball wrapped up with a popular game called Coke and Pepsi. In this partner game, one

person from each pair stands on either side of the cafeteria. Each side is given a name, either Coke or Pepsi. When coke is called, the person on the pesi side must run to their partner, and the last group to cross the other side is eliminated until only one pair remains.

There was an activity for everyone at the Fall Ball, some fun games requiring lots of energy and others more calm and lowkey. To detail his favorite activity, Nate Bacon, a senior, remarked "I liked hanging with my buddy Zach and drawing pumpkin pictures."

Best Buddies is a wonderful program focusing on inclusivity and community support. The Fall Ball is the first of many events that River Hill's Best Buddies club will be hosting this year. Even if you missed this month's event, there will be a Friendsgiving for the club in November, and everyone is welcome!

Seniors Cram for November 1st College Deadline

By Maire Crooks, The Current Co-Editor-in-Chief

The dreaded November 1st college deadline is here. Some seniors scrambled to complete their Early Decision and Early Action college applications, while others felt confident in the few weeks leading up to this moment.

The Early Decision application deadline is a binding agreement where the applicant declares that if accepted, they must attend the school. Many students choose this option because it typically yields higher acceptance rates, especially from competitive universities. Early Action is non-binding, and is simply an earlier deadline so seniors can receive the decision from that school earlier than if they applied in the Regular Decision pool. Early Action can also be used to express a higher level of interest in a college.

Sarah Chin sarcastically commented that she felt "so excited!" for the deadline when interviewed two weeks beforehand. She had three applications to turn in, but "I haven't started any of them. I usually do things the day before, which is really bad, but I feel like it will be okay. I don't have a concept of reality right now."

Senior Thomas Jayne also had three applications due because most of his colleges "don't have Early Action." However, unlike Sarah, he "at least started all of them," with T-minus one week until the deadline.

Ayşegül Yıldız believes that this task was made especially difficult due to the numerous senior

events and activities that happened at the beginning of the year. The week before the deadline, she said, "There are way too many things going on in October... It is extremely busy for absolutely no reason," mentioning the senior crab feast, her big cross country meet, and internship she is committed to.

Applications are time consuming. Students must fill out their Common Application, including writing a personal essay, complete college-specific supplemental essays, and fill out tailored questions for each institution they are applying to. For most, the longest step is in writing their personal statement and supplemental prompts. Many students review and edit their writing multiple times before submitting to ensure it is their best work possible.

Ayşegül, like Sarah and Thomas, was in the process of completing said application steps when interviewed. She was "extremely stressed... I am a big procrastinator as an individual... I started writing my first supplemental [on October 22nd]." She finished one school and planned to complete one of her seven remaining schools each day to finish on time. Many of her institutions' honors programs require an extra essay, which adds another layer of work to complete.

Unlike their classmates, seniors Daniel Wang and Varun Dhond were prepared for the upcoming cutoff. "I finished [my applications]," said Daniel, with over a week to go before November 1st.

He believes this happened because he "had them 75 percent done over the summer."

At the same time, Varun also articulated, "I am not feeling overwhelmed. I have finished most of the supplementals; 33 out of 35 [essays] are done." He planned to submit all 19 of his applications, even the ones with later deadlines, by November 1st to get them over with.

Andrew Guo was feeling comfortable with his timeline as well. He had completed the University of Maryland, University of Virginia, Northeastern, and UNC Chapel Hill applications. Only

Brown University, his top choice, was left to submit. He was working on making his Brown application better by "revising essays," the week before the due date.

Despite differing statuses on where they are in their application process, each senior had the same piece of advice to the current juniors: do not procrastinate! Ayşegül sums up their messages with: "Do NOT slack off! I told myself I was going to work on all of this during my summer and then I enjoyed my summer a bit too much. Start early and do a little bit every day... [and] the work is still manageable."

Pep Rally Photo Recap



Prepping for Poetry Out Loud

By *Babiha Kaur, Digital Editor*



River Hill, along with other high schools in Howard County, will be participating in Poetry Out Loud, a national poetry recitation competition empowering students to learn about poetry and the art of recitation. There are class-level competitions, a school-wide competition, and a national competition which will take place from April to May of next year.

In order to participate in Poetry Out Loud, students in English classes at River Hill are required to choose a poem from the Poetry Out Loud website, memorize it, and recite it with emotion in front of the class. After teachers assess and score each student's presentation, the participant that wins the class level competition will move on to the school competition, and the student that wins the school competi-

tion will go on to the national one, and so on. Students are not only evaluated on their ability to memorize and recite the poem, but also on their capability to present the deeper meaning of the poem with vehemence, tone, and inflection.

Students have varying opinions about participating in the competition. Senior Jasmitha Alle expresses her enthusiasm, describing, "I'm excited because it's definitely an excellent opportunity to share poetry, and since I've been doing poetry for a long time, anything that concerns poetry excites me. I also think it's a good opportunity for people to develop their speaking and performance skills." Senior Smera Singh, however, is not particularly excited. She asserts, "I don't know if I'm looking forward to it or not because I don't know

what to expect. It's still fairly new. I've actually never heard of a spoken poetry competition before." Poetry Out Loud seems to be a unique opportunity for River Hill students.

The purpose of Poetry Out Loud is to allow students to engage with poetry and find ways to express its deeper meaning to an audience. Students have different ideas about what the competition is meant to do for individuals and for the school as a whole. Senior Jazzy Dong describes, "I think it's just to allow students to express themselves through a form of art." Because poetry is a means of expression, the competition is meant to get students to resonate with an audience through meaningful inflection. Furthermore, Jasmitha believes that "oral interpretation, poetry promotion, and artistic expression" are at

the heart of recitation.

In order to participate in the competition, students must choose a poem. Jazzy has already picked a poem that she will recite. Her poem, about disposable chopsticks, stood out to her because she "interpreted it as America's perception of Chinese culture and how they kind of throw it to the side and minimize it, so I thought that really spoke out to me." It is important to choose a poem that has a message that resonates with the student.

In general, poetry is meaningful to a variety of students for many reasons. Jasmitha shares, "To me, poetry is an escape. It's something that has always been there with me. Most of the time, I find motivation to do things through poetry. It's something really valuable to me." Jazzy finds poetry exhilarating, commenting, "It's one of my favorite forms of writing because it's easy to write and it's also very interpretive."

Overall, students are eager to see how the Poetry Out Loud competition unfolds. Jasmitha concludes, "I think it's all about fostering confidence in students, culture awareness, and community building."

Original Member of the Norfolk 17 Visits River Hill

By *Connor Hawthorne, Sports Editor and Sanjana Jain, Staff Writer*

Imagine having to worry about being attacked every day when you go to school because of the color of your skin. To many people, segregation can appear like a far off era of history that has no effect on our modern life. While this might be a nice thought, as we try to grapple with the darker aspects of our nation's history, segregation and the era of Jim Crow was not that far off, many of those affected are still alive today.

In 1954 the Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, KS* ruled that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional, forever altering the country's relationship between race and education. Despite this monumental ruling, true integration did not occur until many years later.

On October 5, Mr. Al Gonsouland came to visit River Hill and speak about his experiences growing up in the Jim Crow Era. Mr. Gonsouland was a member of the Norfolk 17, the first group of black students to integrate the all white high schools in Norfolk, Virginia. Mr Gonsouland first became aware of the historical significance of segregation when hearing about the Little Rock Nine. He explains how "I was aware, because of 1957 in Little Rock Arkansas and Little

Rock Nine, so I knew of that and I was able to think to myself I wonder what they did." Later in life Mr. Gonsouland had the chance to meet the members of the Little Rock Nine and he "had the chance to sit down and talk with them."

Even though Mr. Gonsouland grew up in Norfolk, Virginia during a time of racism, discrimination, and segregation, he still managed to get a good education. He credits many of his life's successes to his can-do attitude, which ensures perseverance and hard work despite the challenges he faced. Mr. Gonsouland attributed these values to his parents; his father who served in the navy and his mother whose iron-will and determination were the catalyst for him attending the new school in the first place.

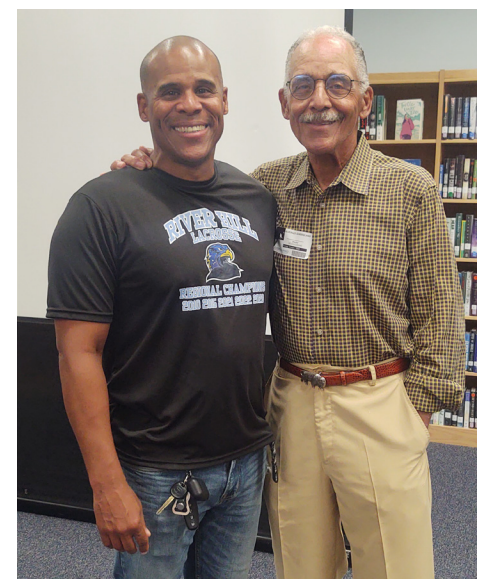
Many of the most inspirational pieces of advice from the speech, Mr. Gonsouland credits to his mother - she was who originally signed them up to be among the first students to integrate into the new high school. Mr. Gonsouland didn't want to go to the new school but his mother understood the historical significance, the importance of integration, and the civil rights movement. Although he originally desired not to go to the all white school, Mr. Gonsouland explained

how he could never argue with his parents, and so for better or worse he was going to be among the first to integrate. According to Mr Gonsouland, "there was no other alternative."

Mr. Gonsouland explained how on the night before the first day of school he was terribly nervous to be among the only black students in such a hostile environment. He described how he called his friend and they discussed what would happen to them during the next day of school. In the back of their minds were the stories of Emmet Till and other lynchings of young black men who defied the status quo.

During the first day of school, Mr. Gonsouland described how a crowd had formed outside the school; grown men and women had come to watch the black students enter the all-white school. Many of them shouted insults at Mr. Gonsouland and his companions. Mr. Gonsouland described how he was afraid that they would begin to throw things at them, however luckily this never happened.

During these first days at the school, Mr. Gonsouland drew inspiration from the little Rock nine and thought about their experiences. He recounts how "I looked



back and thought, they survived I guess, so I guess I'm going to too."

Through the struggles of being one of the first black students to integrate into the all white high school Mr. Gonsouland learned perseverance, determination and a relentless work ethic that followed him throughout his life as he later attended an HBCU and later became an officer in the United States Navy just like his father. Despite his achievements and historical significance, Mr. Gonsouland explained that his greatest accomplishment was fatherhood and raising his children. Mr. Gonsouland told the audience that the most important thing we can do in life is to develop good values and pass these on to our own children.

Embattled: Hawks From the Armed Forces

By Benjamin Hong, Features Editor

The U.S military has been a polarizing topic throughout history. However, no matter what particular subject a given debate focuses on, both sides of any such debate retain a level of respect for one aspect of the military: the men and women who have served their country with the American flag proudly embroidered on their shoulders. Veterans, especially those who have served overseas, have experienced unique moments and built strong personal relationships that cannot truly be replicated in any other career path. River Hill High School has a number of these veterans on its staff, and the stories they have about their unique experiences in and related to the armed forces are seldom mined but forever useful.

Richard Cumby, a security assistant at River Hill, served in the United States Marines for four years. Fresh out of high school, Mr. Cumby went to a recruiter and began his military journey 9 days after graduation. Joining the infantry division of the Marines, he described going to California for training before being deployed to various locations around the world; he was stationed in “the Philippines, then Okinawa, Japan, then Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. There I was, 18 years old and in a foreign country, and it was amazing.” A story that he felt comfortable sharing from his time abroad is one that showcases the dynamic between the divisions of the Marines. He described how “different branches of the Marines mess with each other a lot, like one time in Okinawa, Japan, the aviation division picked us up, and while we were flying back, the pilot started reaching up like he was looking for something, and the crew told us to buckle up. Of course, we were terrified, but they fixed the “issue” about 50 ft in the air and when we got off they were all laughing their butts off.”



Mr. Cumby emphasized that while amazing opportunities exist everywhere in the world, the military is a great place to be for young people transitioning into adulthood. The primary factor behind his personal decision to enlist was that “as a young man, I needed a lot of discipline in my life and I didn’t see a path for me in college.” However, he also recognizes the military’s capacity as a launching pad for lucrative careers, and explained how he knew “a bunch of guys that went into infantry Marines, stayed 20 years, midway through they switched to the intelligence field, and now they’re out making \$250,000 a year because of their training in the Marine Corps.” The point he ultimately makes is not necessarily a sales pitch for the armed forces, but rather an acknowledgment that “a lot of young people nowadays have their paths set with college or what have you, but there’s several that don’t know what they’re doing, and the military is a good option for them.”

John Moscato, a computer science teacher at River Hill, served in the United States Army for over 30 years. In his first year of college, he decided to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), a diagnostic test for determining an enlistee’s qualification for different jobs within the military. Receiving the highest possible score, he was soon approached by recruiters from every branch of the military. He ultimately decided to “go into the Army as a reservist, that way I could continue being in college. I’d do my training, they’d pay me every month, and when I first enlisted they were basically throwing money at us, so I got a lot of money as a reservist.” He was initially a cannon crewman, working with field artillery equipment, but he soon transferred to a military intelligence unit. This was quite a shift in career path, so he was sent to Brigham Young University to take courses in German. He fully

joined the Army just before 9/11 as an IT specialist, and has been in it up until the present day.

Mr. Moscato was deployed twice after another shift to civil affairs specialist (a role that he explains encompasses “military governance, humanitarian assistance, and reconstruction”), first to the UAE and secondly to Afghanistan. While working to support SEAL team units in the UAE, he had a chance encounter with the son of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. On the first anniversary of 9/11, he was instructed to remain in his UAE hotel, but what the US did not know was that the Arab Bodybuilding Federation was holding their annual meeting in that same hotel. As Moscato explains it, “I got in an elevator with an Egyptian gentleman who was one of the officials, and when he saw this one guy, he stopped the elevator and signaled to me to wait while he walked over to him. The person he approached was very large and was obviously important because he had bodyguards on either side. When he got back into the elevator, he pointed to the guy and said ‘Saddam’s uncle.’ Uncle is an Arabic term of affection, it was actually his son.”

On his second deployment, Mr. Moscato was sent to build schools for children in western Afghanistan. He ended up helping to put more than 12,000 Afghani children into school, but the path to that remarkable achievement was not a perfect one. Mr. Moscato shares an anecdote, displaying the occasional idiosyncrasy of the Army, regarding his collaboration with the armies of other nations in Afghanistan. He was qualified to speak German for the Army, and his unit “had people who spoke Italian for the Army,” yet because of his Italian last name, “they were sent to work with the Germans and I was sent to the Italians. It should have all been fine, but my family’s lived in America for over 25 years. I got there, they

didn’t speak English, and I didn’t speak Italian, so we had to kind of fake it until we made it. Thankfully we were planning buildings, and engineering drawings are the same the world over, so the pantomime worked out okay until I actually learned Italian by watching dubbed episodes of the Simpsons with the Italian guys on the satellite TV they had.”

Veterans have the respect of the nation, quantified through discounts and priority services in places as wide ranging as restaurants and airports. Their stories of a life non-vets can scarcely imagine inspire patriotism and respect within those that take the time to listen. But even in the absence of titles and unique experiences, taking the time to hear people’s stories can offer amusing stories and unexpected rewards. Their stories will probably not involve faked helicopter malfunctions and sons of world leaders, but by lending an ear to a given person, stories of equivalent or greater importance are bound to emerge.

What are Students Listening to?

Of students surveyed...

20%

Said their favorite genre is...



POP

14%

Said their favorite genre is...



RAP

10%

Said their favorite genre is...



HIP HOP

8%

Said their favorite genre is...



ROCK

Dual Threat: Shane Schrecengost and Omar Hassan

By Connor Hawthorne, Sports Editor and Jack Hardman, Staff Writer

The River Hill football team contains many talented players; however, in particular two players stand out on both offense and defense. Junior Shane Schrecengost and Senior Omar Hassan lead the team to victory through hard work, dedication and commitment to the team.

Shane's Journey

Shane's football experience began at a young age. "I started really early, I started playing flag football at six years old, and then I started tackle by seventh grade. It got much more serious in high school," he explains.

When Shane began playing football in high school, he initially played tight end and outside linebacker, positions he already had practice with due to his years of football experience. Shane's sophomore year marked a critical moment in his high school career as he was moved to quarterback, a true testament to his athletic versatility.

For Shane, transitioning to quarterback was not without difficulties. Shane explains how "There were a lot of challenges with it, knowing where everyone has to be at all times, know all the plays," This mental aspect of the game can be challenging for some quarterbacks, as they need to be aware of what is happening around them at all times and be able to make quick decisions in the heat of the moment.

In order to become a better quarterback, Shane spends many hours studying plays and watching football film. He describes how "In film we probably watch an hour every day in practice and then I watch another hour and a half every day on my own." This dedication to the complex mental aspect of the game is one of the reasons for Shane's success as a quarterback.

Shane's journey as a quarterback has not only developed his football skills but also his character. "It made me mature a lot more because I realized that everyone was looking up to me now," he says, recognizing the leadership role he's embraced. "You can't let the little things get to your head and affect your game. You need to keep it positive with everyone else, make sure they're playing their best because if you go low then everyone else goes low and then it just tripples down." Playing quarterback has taught Shane many life lessons that will no doubt be useful later in life.

In addition to playing as Quarterback on offense, Shane also plays linebacker on defense. Play-

ing throughout the entire game can be challenging for even the toughest football players. Shane describes how "It's tiring to play offense and defense, you need to be in really good shape, you need to conserve your energy but still go 100% on every play. You need to know everything offense and defense wise for the plays. Know where you have to be at all times."

Playing throughout the entire game can put Shane's leadership skills to the test, as the other players look to him to lead the team on both offense and defense. Shane explains, "I'm very vocal on both sides, offense and defense, I'm not afraid to say what needs to be said to keep us in the game. On defense I study a lot of film so I call plays on defense so I know a lot about what their formations are and what their tendencies are." This dedication to the sport allows Shane to lead the team throughout the game, and makes him an invaluable part of River Hill football.



Omar's Perspective

Omar's football career began his freshman year of high school because "[his] mom was scared of injuries so [he] waited until highschool." Omar first stepped into the role of quarterback during his sophomore year when the starter got injured in a game.

What started as a fun activity quickly became serious for Omar when he discovered that he had a real talent for football. He excelled on both sides of the ball but was exceptionally good at defensive back. A defensive back is a player who is responsible for covering wide receivers and stopping the pass and is usually one of the fastest players on defense. Omar fits the role quite well, boasting a 4.55 40-yard dash and with that kind of speed he has become very good at breaking up

passes and forcing teams to run the ball.

Coach Van decided to utilize Omar's athleticism and put him at quarterback where Omar said Coach Van taught him, "a lot about the IQ of football and knowing what certain positions need to do." Omar talked about some challenges he faced when learning his position which included, "knowing the offense and growing as a leader because as a quarterback you have to lead the offense and know every other position, and routes on run and pass plays." He also acknowledged that he has work to do on the field when he explained that, "something I need to do better is anticipation which is when we throw the ball I need to do a better job anticipating the defense instead of waiting for things to open up." However, Omar excels in River Hill's trademark run offense due to his athleticism making, "run plays one of {his} strengths".

Shane and Omar's Stats

Shane:

4 rushing touchdowns
9 tackles for loss
1 passing touchdown
55 tackles
1 receiving touchdown
1 sack
330 rushing yards

Omar:

11 rushing touchdowns
1 tackle for loss
2 passing touchdowns
14 tackles
475 rushing yards
2 pass breakups



more than Omar who has a 4.0 weighted GPA and scored well on the SAT. His grades combined with his exceptional athletic ability have garnered him attention from top universities like William and Mary, Georgetown, Columbia, and UPenn. He currently has an offer to play defensive back at the University of William and Mary. Omar said, "I wish I would have started talking to colleges earlier which would have led to more offers for me." Omar's coaches have also been critical to his recruitment process. Omar said that "Coach Van has helped with the recruiting process" and, "Coach Breon helped put me in the best position to get my film out to college coaches."

Omar has maximized his time during high school football and has some impressive results to show for it. Through hard work and a love of the game he has led his team through many tough games and emerged victorious. He led the team to the state semifinals last year and is likely to make a deep run in the playoffs this year. As the team approaches senior night against Atholton and the playoffs after that we look forward to seeing how Omar will lead the team during his final games as a hawk.

Senior Dylan Martinez Breaks Goal Scoring Record

By Hasan Mirasyedi, Staff Writer

Senior Dylan Martinez shattered River Hill's soccer goal record in a single season by scoring 22 goals. The record was previously held by Alex Krasue, a 2020 River Hill graduate who managed to bag 15 goals in the 2018 season. Krause then went on to play division one soccer at Duquesne University. Before Alex Krause, Justin Harris, who currently plays division one soccer at UMD, managed

to score 14 in a season and won Maryland Player of The Year.

Senior Dylan is a four year varsity starter. His freshman and sophomore years, Dylan started as center back. His incredible pace allowed him to recover very quickly and not get beat by attackers. Currently, he plays attack and his success can be attributed to his quickness on the field as well as his extreme technical ability. Captain

Allan Ying stated, "seeing him breeze past defenders with ease is really exciting to watch." That, along with his very impressive ability to keep the ball, his finishing, and his versatility on the field all add up to why he has been such a successful forward this year.

Last year, Dylan was out for a majority of the season due to a leg injury during the county opener against Wilde Lake. He remained injured until River Hill's first playoff game against Long Reach, where he managed to score a hat trick and seal the win for the Hawks 3-0. When asked about his accomplishments this season, Dylan stated that "it still feels surreal sometimes. I went from missing my junior year because of a broken leg to breaking records my senior year." Coach Shagogue added, "From 9th and 10th grader who played defense, to a lost season because of a broken leg, Dylan has grown and developed greatly."

Last year was a very disappointing season for the Hawks soccer team as they had only won

6 out of their 16 games. This year, the Hawks experienced a much more successful season going 12-2 heading into playoffs. Going into the season, Dylan was "optimistic." He later expressed his pride in the team saying he was "proud of how the team bounced back after a disappointing regular season last year." He mentioned that he "knew that a bunch of younger kids on the team had improved a lot during the off-season and had a feeling we were going to be much better than last year."

Some of Dylan's accomplishments this season includes his heroic efforts against an undefeated Howard team. It was the last regular season game in the county and Howard at the time was 11-0, undefeated by anyone. River Hill managed to spoil their record with Dylan scoring the two goals that led the Hawks to victory. Dylan also scored four goals against Atholton in a 4-1 victory, as well as scoring a hattrick on his senior night.



RHHS Skateboarders: One Push at a Time

By Bryan Simo, Staff Writer

This year, the skateboarders at River Hill are looking to find a home at the school. River Hill has a small but strong group of skateboarders that are dedicated to their craft and finally want to make a name for themselves.

After the return of students to school from the pandemic, a new community emerged: a community of skateboarders. Starting with a group of students in the class of 2025 who enjoyed skating together, the group immediately blossomed and attracted the attention of other skaters from all grades. One of the pioneers of this movement for a skateboarding club at River Hill is Thomas Li, a junior and a skateboarder of three years. When asked about how he met other skaters at the school, he recounts, "I just happened to be friends with them and they just happened to skateboard." He then speculated, "I'm pretty sure I got some of them into skateboarding as well."

Now, with the group gaining more traction and attracting new skaters faster than ever, a club at the school is "quintessential in growing the skateboarding community," according to senior Griffin Millstein, a seasoned skat-

er at the school. As Griffin puts it, "there've been many skaters who've come and gone through the school, but without a solid place for them to consolidate, there really hasn't been a real community until now," and this community might just see new heights with their saving grace, Mr. Perraud.

Mr. Perraud is a relatively new teacher at River Hill, with this only being his second year at the school. He began skating in his youth. Inspired by the X-Games and Tony Hawk, he claims, "I always wanted to try skateboarding but never had a skateboard." Once he finally got his hands on one, he fell in love. Despite his love for the sport, he took a fifteen year hiatus, only getting back into it during quarantine. "I was just bored," he says, "and I think a lot of people were getting back into those kinds of activities, like things you could do that were active and outside but you could do by yourself, and I was just curious to see what I could still do."

Since skateboarding is such a big part of Mr. Perraud's personality, last year, Mrs. Lidgard reached out to him to make a skateboarding club. At that point, "I didn't start one formally," he ex-

plains, "but a lot of students who do skate came to my room and hung out during Hawktime, and I talked to them about skateboarding."

When asked about any efforts of potentially starting one this year, Mr. Perraud responds, "Not really," describing how he hasn't done much to formalize anything, with the main obstacles

being his workload as a senior English teacher during college application season, and the difficulty of starting a club with "an inherently dangerous activity" as he describes it. Despite the obstacles, Mr. Perraud is open to creating a space for skateboarders at the school, hop-

ing to "bring a lot of different people together and form friendships that... wouldn't form otherwise." Whether there's an official or unofficial club, the skaters at school would be pleased. Veteran skateboarder and senior Daniel Murakami says, "That's fire--I'd like that," with Thomas even adding that "any community to start with would be helpful."



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With such a club possibly attracting new skaters or others interested in the sport, Mr. Perraud has this message to any newcomers: "Start slow and start small, and just see if you enjoy it, and if you do, just find a way to do it that's fun for you."

What is River Hill Listening To?

By Ryan Burnett, Staff Writer

Hiding under hair and in every class, airpods can be seen everywhere you look. Despite many rules against using them during class, their use continues mostly unabated among students. So you are probably wondering “what are they listening to?”

From rock to hip hop, pop to country, River Hill enjoys it all. Senior Nick Moss says that his music tastes are “all over the place” but he enjoys listening to “rock, rap and hip hop” Moss went on to mention the benefits of listening to these genres of music, as he feels “very energized while listening to music, probably during 1st period because it keeps me focused.”

On the other hand Senior Shae Fraser discussed that she lis-

tens to “indie sad girl music”.

When listening to her music, she feels “sad like I just got heartbroken even though I have been in a relationship for over two years.” She enjoys listening to this “at night because it lets me release my emotions.”

Senior Foster Sariscak, discusses “I listen to many different things but I would say pop.” Foster explains that when he listens to music he feels “good and focused.”

Whether you’re listening to music to drown out your teacher’s voice or jamming out while working towards that 11:59 deadline, students listen to a wide variety of different music and genres here at River Hill.

Cinnamon Swirl Banana

Bread Review

By Alexander El Sawi, Staff Writer

Fall is starting to pick up, and if you want a cozy traditional treat with a seasonal twist, consider Sally’s Baking Addiction Cinnamon Swirl Banana Bread. I chose to make this recipe because I enjoy banana bread, but I wanted it to be more suited for fall. I also had past-ripe bananas on my counter.

In terms of the recipe, all ingredients are pantry staples. If you have basic baking ingredients and your bananas are looking slightly on the bad side, perfect-you are all set. However, if you are missing any ingredients, substitutions are included in the recipe. Unlike the ingredients, the recipe, while detailed, can be pretty daunting. Freshman Sydney Case commented that, “as a person only with experience baking cookies, this recipe looks very complicated and lengthy.”

What sets this banana bread apart from the rest is its cinnamon swirl, a cinnamon sugar mixture spread throughout the inside of the bread and even a subtle crust on top, only noticeable when fresh. I decided to make this recipe into muffins instead of the traditional loaf, which was an option in the recipe. I figured it would be more easily sampled if it were a small muffin. However, this had an impact on the texture and the

flavor.

Because I put the batter into muffin form, it dispersed the amount of cinnamon among many muffins, instead of having it in just one loaf. This explains why there was more to be desired when it came to the muffins’ cinnamon flavor. Five out of ten students who sampled said it lacked cinnamon flavor. But as for the general banana bread taste, many enjoyed it. It wasn’t overly sweet and had a “strong banana flavor, but that isn’t a problem” according to Adam Hawthorne.

If I were to recreate this recipe I would have baked it as it is intended, in a loaf. I think that baking it in muffins missed out on a lot of the cinnamon flavor and the loaf would have created a more ideal texture for banana bread.

Overall, I really enjoyed making this recipe. While it might have been difficult at times

I would recommend anyone who wants a rewarding challenge to give this recipe a try.



A Guide to Fall Happiness

By Abi Paterniti, Staff Writer



When thinking of fall, you think of apples, colorful leaves, apple picking and pies. Fall is the unreplicable masterful transition from winter to radiant spring. The primary colors of the fall rainbow are orange, red and yellow. From the very first moment you walk outside on a brilliant autumn day, it is easy to see these colors in the surrounding environment.

So what is the most outstanding part of the autumn season? Many, like Mehreen Alagmir, say their favorite part of fall is “the vast spectrum of autumn colors because I love taking pictures outside.” Others say Thanksgiving foods because of their exclusive fall tastes. Sunny Tian agrees, saying, “I love eating tasty Thanksgiving foods the entire season of fall.”

Some others argue that the aesthetic fall attire of sweaters, jeans, joggers, and Ugg boots is the most outstanding part of fall. As Karen Interiano exclaimed, “I can’t wait for the Uggs to come!” But, in my opinion, Pumpkins clears the roster.

There are many reasons for why pumpkins are the best part of fall, including health benefits that come from adding pumpkins to spice up your fall meals. According to Northwestern Medicine, The health benefits of eating pumpkins include a healthy dose of fiber, which in turn supports your digestive system, regulates blood sugar, and reduces risk of heart disease. Pumpkins are also low in calories but high in fiber so therefore, filling and nourishing. Due to pumpkins’ orange color, they are a great cancer-fighting food. Pumpkins get their orange color from beta-carotene, which helps your body absorb antioxidants. You can even eat the pumpkin seeds! They are a tasty, easy

snack that studies show reduce LDL cholesterol.

Another benefit is pumpkin decorating and carving which provide a great activity to do with family and friends. For Victoria Yao, “It is a tradition for me and my family to decorate pumpkins every year.” There are many ways to decorate and carve pumpkins. A great technique for carving a pumpkin is to start by cutting a hole around the stem of the pumpkin that acts as a lid for the pumpkin so that you can easily access the inside of your pumpkin throughout the carving process.

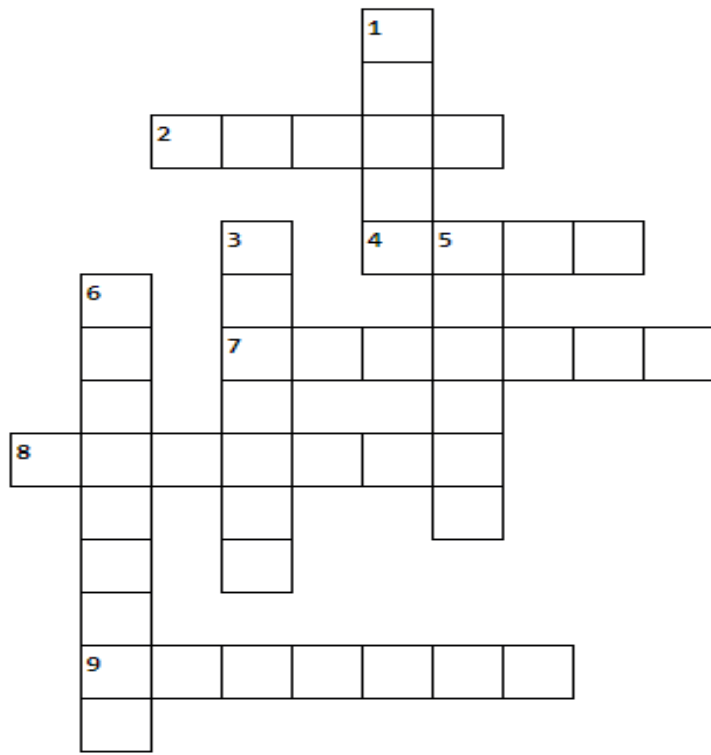
The next step is to take out the yummy inside of the pumpkin (don’t get rid of the inside!) Instead make some pumpkin muffins for your mornings and roast those seeds to claim all those health benefits! Once the inside is empty you can start your layout for your carving design. Outline your design and then start carving. Once you’ve completed the carving process add a candle to the bottom of the inside of your pumpkin for a nice touch.

There are also different types of pumpkins, they come in different colors, sizes and shapes. In the words of Martha Stewart, a successful cookbook author and business woman, “why stick to the standard orange icon of fall? From pale and monochromatic and bright and bold to eerily enigmatic and elegantly dark, the world of pumpkins has something for everyone.” The unique qualities of pumpkins make them the best addition to any outdoor or interior decor.

Next time you go to the grocery store, or local farm grab a fall pumpkin to end your autumn season by exploring all you have to benefit from the best part of fall.

Fun and Games - Page 8

River Hill Staff Crossword Puzzle



Across

- 2. Assistant Varsity football coach
- 4. Health teacher by day, coach by night
- 7. Former River Hill principal
- 8. Rive Hill journalism sponsor
- 9. Teacher from Belarus

Down



- 1. French teacher
- 3. Calculus teacher
- 5. Former River Hill softball coach
- 6. Independent research teacher

Y	R	S	M	I	R	G	L	I	P	O	I	K	I
M	A	S	H	E	D	P	O	T	A	T	O	E	S
G	T	T	R	A	T	E	T	H	Y	A	H	U	R
N	I	E	B	A	T	A	T	R	R	T	I	S	H
I	T	U	R	I	I	T	U	R	R	O	O	R	T
V	C	P	N	I	H	F	R	S	E	P	Y	T	U
I	L	A	U	S	O	U	K	E	B	T	L	S	O
G	E	L	S	R	T	I	E	O	N	E	I	O	M
S	A	S	A	S	I	U	Y	G	A	E	M	E	Y
K	M	G	G	B	E	T	F	A	R	W	A	R	L
N	F	R	F	P	T	R	A	F	C	S	F	B	P
A	E	A	T	M	I	O	O	N	I	U	M	D	S
H	A	V	R	O	K	H	O	L	N	N	S	A	Y
T	E	Y	H	T	O	I	U	F	E	T	G	A	D

1						9	4	
	4	7			9	5	6	
9			2				7	3
2		6	7	9	3	8		4
3		1		6			9	7
				1	2		5	6
	1			2		6		5
6				5			3	
5	7	9	3	8		4	2	

Can you find all of the Thanksgiving words?

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Stuffing | Football |
| Mashed Potatoes | Thanksgiving |
| Casserole | Plymouth |
| Cranberry | Family |
| Pilgrims | Gravy |
| Puritan | Turkey |
| Sweet Potato | |

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