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# No Tennis!

By Kaiya Parkinson

In the room of a high school sophomore, a tennis racket and sports bag lean against the wall. They used to accompany the student to school, but until the tennis season officially starts, they must be left at home.

Among the many schools in the Newport News, Hampton, and Yorktown areas, many of the schools have less funding and higher poverty levels. Higher poverty directly affects sports. How different is it for students who don't receive as much funding? You can begin to see disparities between different schools in this area.

In an effort to sustain a fair sports environment, students have mandatory off-seasons. This means that no sports teams can practice if they're not in season.

To some athletes, it's aggravating. They miss their team environment and wish they could keep up their athletic training. Team environments help them stay healthy and active. They also come to rely on their team environments in the high-pressure environment that is high school.

To other athletes, they enjoy being able to participate in several different sports without having overlapping season schedules. Or they find value in the equality this maintains between the schools. If Tabb High School receives higher sports funding and they can receive better training and equipment, is it fair that they can train in off-seasons, if Woodside, who doesn't have the money to spare can't?

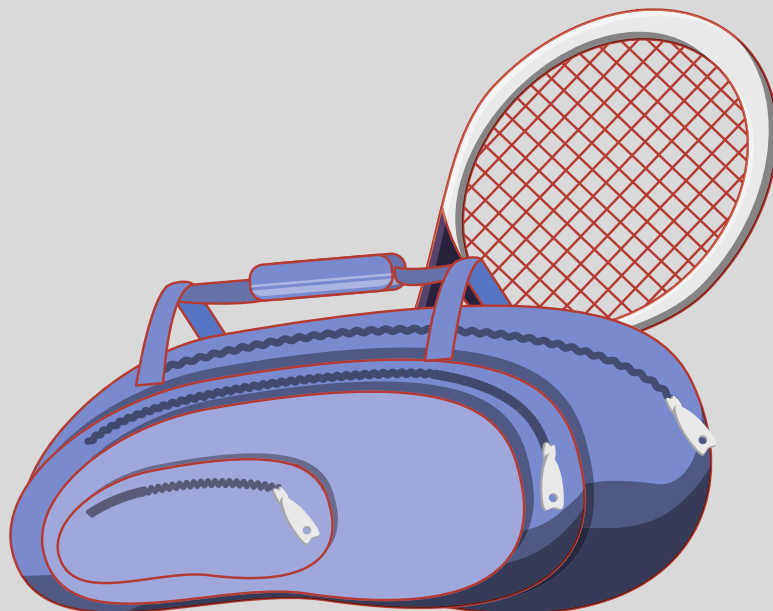
"I like [the team dynamic] and it can be especially beneficial if you're friends and really close with your teammates." A high school senior (who we'll call Jane, wished to be kept anonymous) who swims for the Woodside swim team since her freshman year, stated in regards to team environments and dynamics.

Another student, Brooklyn, a member of Woodside's tennis team said, "I don't love [off-seasons] because I don't think it's necessary for some sports. I guess I understand though-why we need to give coaches time off or allow other students to participate in different sports." She also expressed her appreciation for having a physical outlet and, "I kind of like being forced to get to know people and work with them."

With the range of sports Woodside offers, it allows students to play a variety of sports during the off-seasons. Neither student acknowledged that it was beneficial, Jane the swim team senior said, "People that play other sports, they don't mind the off-seasons- they use other sports as conditioning for their primary sport." With these different varieties, it gave them a work around to find a team to be a part of. Maybe they couldn't work with their same team all year, but they got to meet other people.

Dr. Eagle, a pediatrician, frowns on year-round sports, because it doesn't give kids enough exposure to other experiences (their lives are too centered around one sport) and year-round training increases the incidence of overuse injuries.

Tennis season opens up and the sophomore packs her tennis bag for school. She looks forward to interacting with her team, being more active, and practicing her serve. Just like so many students re-entering their favorite sports.



# Kicking Off a Season of Uncertainty

By Ghelka Ibarra

The Woodside High School Varsity Soccer Team is preparing for their upcoming season, and the field is mixed with uncertainty and unsureness. We sat down with a few players to hear their thoughts, and the responses painted a complicated picture. While some players admitted they felt the season might be a struggle, others remained cautiously hopeful, predicting it wouldn't be as good as past years but still holding potential for surprises.

As tryouts approach slowly, the team looks ahead to see how things will shape up. Conditioning is in session and much of it will set the tone for the season. "Conditioning is where we figure out who's ready to put in the work," one player said, "but then again, you never know who might surprise you." Players are also eager to see what new talent tryouts might bring.

Despite the doubts, players have been engaged in private scrimmages with other players from nearby high schools to give it their all and learn what they have left to learn. Though the players feel uncertain, there's one thing that the Woodside Wolverine Varsity team agrees on: They're ready to fight and play strong for a good season. No matter the challenges, they're committed to working hard, improving as a team, and leaving their all on the soccer field. This season might not be easy, but they're determined to make it count.



Tryouts are just around the corner for those interested in joining the team. Players must bring a completed physical form, appropriate soccer gear, including cleats and shin guards, and plenty of water to stay hydrated. Tryouts will be held on the school's main field, and Head Coach Jason Ceraul is the point of contact for any questions or concerns. Coach Ceraul encourages all aspiring players to contact his school email, [jceraul@hampton.k12.va.us](mailto:jceraul@hampton.k12.va.us), for more details. Go, Wolverines!



# Sideline Queens: Woodside High School's Cheer Teams

By Emmy Watson

Woodside's cheer team is like a dark horse, they're on the sidelines, yet they can steal the spotlight during a football game. From their cheers to their practices, they never seem to stop bringing out new cheers for us all to see.

Woodside's cheer team is led by Coach Hargrove, who leads the varsity team and is the head coach for cheer, and Coach Jones, who leads the competition team. Coach Hargrove is a teacher here at Woodside and teaches Economics and Personal Financing classes. She also helps with the Bayport station outside of the lunchroom. Coach Jones is also a teacher here at Woodside. She teaches many science classes including Biology, Anatomy, and Zoology. They are both dedicated to their jobs as they help each student succeed with their courses while making their teams the best they can be.

Woodside's JV and Varsity teams are both well into their basketball season. They have seen the basketball teams score many wins throughout the season. Both teams have been dedicated to all their different routines and practices, hoping to wow the crowd during games. So far, the boys' basketball team has gone undefeated and is close to having a third district championship under their belt. The girls' basketball team has suffered a few defeats, but has also done a great job with their games and is continuing to score some wins. Both teams are hoping to win the playoffs and continue to play at their very best. The cheerleaders have also done exceptionally well when cheering for each of their teams, bringing the all-important school spirit to each game. They hope to see the basketball teams do well this season and will also do their very best in each of their routines.

Aside from JV and Varsity teams, Woodside has a whole separate team: The Competition Team. The Competition Team normally consists of a mix of both JV and Varsity teams while also accepting other students to compete with the team as well. Cheer competitions consist of other teams in the region competing in the regionals, (which has two rounds) to be judged and possibly move on to states. The teams each do different routines and are judged based on tightness, execution, difficulty of the routine, technique, crowd involvement, and more. Each team has practiced routines for this competition diligently, hoping to move on to states and possibly even move on to nationals. The Woodside Competition team competed on October 26th, 2024. They fought very well and hard as they practiced their routines persistently, but sadly fell short and did not move on the second round of regionals.

I was able to get an interview with Amelia Garcia, who is a junior part of the Varsity team, was on the JV team for both her freshman and sophomore years, and has been on the competition team for all three years of her high school career. Here is what she had to say:

Q: What is a life lesson or thing that you've learned from cheer?

AMELIA: My coach has always told us that it's better to be early than late, I'm not entirely sure how to explain it but I've taken that and put it into my own life.

Q: I heard the team had a competition on October 26th. How do you think you did?

AMELIA: I think we did our best. Even though we didn't win, I feel like we should have!



Q: What do you think about basketball season? Do you think you've done well so far?

AMELIA: We've done good so far. It's a lot different now that I'm on Varsity. It can be stressful sometimes, but I'm still having fun because I just like being there.

I also interviewed Trinity White, who is a senior, and has been on the Varsity team since her sophomore year, and was on the JV team for her freshmen year, and was on the competition team from sophomore year to her senior year. Here is what she had to say:

Q: What was your favorite accomplishment you've made in cheer?

TRINITY: I'd have to say my freshman year when I became the co-captain of the JV team.

Q: What does a normal practice day look like?

TRINITY: We usually start with conditioning, which includes things like running laps around the school, then we practice our cheers, make cheer routines for half-time, and go over our cheer lists.

Q: I heard the team had a competition on October 26th. How do you think you did?

TRINITY: I feel really great about it. Although, I feel like we should've made it to the second round, I still feel like we did great.

Woodside cheer teams continue to have a lot going on throughout the year. If you wish to see more of the Varsity, JV, and Competition teams, you can take a look at their Instagram page, @woodsidehighcheer, or take a look at the Instagram page for Woodside Athletics, @woodside\_athletics. There you can find things like tickets to games, when they compete, and even more! Woodside Cheer for the win!

# Pillars of Promise; The NHS's Work Towards a Better Future

By Cozi Seiler

A pledge is proudly promised from the newly inducted members of the National Honor Society as they agree to uphold the pillars of scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

The National Honor Society, also referred to as the NHS, is one of the oldest and most widely recognized extracurriculars in educational institutions. Recently, our schools very own NHS has made some amazing achievements, both inside and outside our communities.

I interviewed member Ana Bates about the NHS and her experience. Bates states if she had to describe the National Honor Society in three words, she would use “Leadership, Community and Generosity.” Bates says this is because the NHS does their best to be as involved in the community as possible, while holding members accountable. The member also states to people: “Don’t be scared to join! It’s really fun if you are interested.”

Recently, the National Honor Society has held many events just this semester. Some key events are the induction ceremony that was held in October of last year, the food drive and the “Give Thanks” week. These events help give back to the community and provide a sense of character within the members. Talking with NHS members may also help students find volunteer opportunities near them.

Another interview was conducted with someone in a leadership position, this member gave some helpful information towards the future of the NHS. The member states some upcoming events for the NHS include a Valentine's day event, a volunteering opportunity at a NNPS archery competition, and a partnership with another school to educate kids about Black History Month. The member also states, "The honors society is something to be truly proud of."

Getting into the club is no easy task, hence is prestigious nature. Those looking for information on the club itself and the application process should see Ms. Christie in B131. One interviewee let us in on the details of the application process, stating a questionnaire is taken and submitted. This interviewee also said that your academic standing and attendance is taking into account, as the club wants to see responsibility and discipline in it's members.

Overall, The National Honor Society is a key part of the Woodside High School community as it remains one of the most widely recognized student organizations in America. The NHS will continue it's work towards a better future for students and the surrounding community.



# Unity Starts In The Center

By Jai Stabler

Does your community have a place where people of all ages can come together and enjoy yourselves in unity? Well Newport News does, and that place in particular is what we call DCC but officially known as Denbigh Community Center.

Denbigh Community Center is a place of fun and love. It is located right down the street of Epps Elementary School and is on Warwick Boulevard. With varying events during all different times of the year, DCC has events for all types of people. From Friday Night Nets during the summer for anyone of any age, to table tennis for the middle age, and then to walking and dancing for the elderly. DCC has it all when it comes to activities but it's more than just a recreational center. DCC is somewhere you can find solitude in what you love to do while also spending time with the ones you love.

"DCC" is practically the staple of the youth in Newport News, everyone knows exactly where and what it is. Around the city it's a go to hangout spot for most, but to others it's a whole different world to escape the things around them. With a youth built off of strictly technology. I honestly feel that there should be a wider variety of promotion for the community center, but it seems that not everyone sees what I see.

When some people think of "DCC" all they see is spoiled children, rude elderly folk, and delinquent teenagers.

But when the people around me such as Jason Brandt think of it, they say, "DCC is really just a place to relax and have fun with the guys you know. It's definitely a go to spot if you wanna hoop or chill, and they have a bunch of events that go on inside the place as well. As someone who didn't even grow up here, this is definitely a place where I've found comfort. A place where families can come together and have fun without discrimination and problems."

When it comes to a place where affordability is always in your answers and availability is always in your favor. "DCC" will always be your first thought in mind when you have nothing to do or just want to get out and have fun. It's just about an equal distance away from the rest of the city. "DCC gives you a big chance to make lots of connections that can benefit you farther down the road, as well as options to go and hang out with lots of friends from Woodside.

There are always opportunities to go out and have fun around this city. But it seems that the first option when the topic comes to the stand is, "yo you tryna go to DCC?" Although not everyone has had the opportunity to experience having fun at DCC I think there should be inclusive events held there so everyone in the district could come and show out and enjoy a day of family, friends, and fun.

In life there will always be a community around you. Family, people you haven't even met, and chapters of the book we call our life that are yet to be written. A place of unity that allows you and the ones you know, as well as the characters yet to be added onto your story is necessary in your life. If you live in Newport News, I think the place for you is Denbigh Community Center.

# Hearing Through History: Pop Music

By Ty Shenk

Making its initial debut in the 1950's and becoming a staple in American pop culture today, the genre of pop music has taken the world by storm. Tracing back to the United States as well as the United Kingdom, pop music has taken its roots from various genres of music. The term "pop," standing for popular, was first used to describe the kinds of music that were popular at the time, and its meaning has carried onto modern times. Some of the genres that it originally sprouted from include jazz, ragtime, and big band styles.

From its original mainly male dominated field, pop music spread into the feminine scene with the creation of pop icons like Cyndi Lauper and Janet Jackson. The first female pop music star was Connie Francis, being the first ever woman to reach number one on the Billboard Hot 100 in the year 1960. Her hit song "Who's Sorry Now" was her signature record, releasing in 1958 and launching her solo career. Francis sparked a period of inspiration for many women all around the world, with artists like Celia Cruz from Cuba and Françoise Hardy from Europe. The inclusion of talented female singers led to the huge spread of pop music as we know it today.

The vibrant and bouncy sound of modern pop music has been able to grow with the help of modern technological advancements. Innovations such as the phonograph as well as the gramophone made it possible to mass produce and spread out musical recordings in the 1940's.



The spread of this style of music throughout homes brought great exposure to the newly created genre, supporting its huge growth throughout the world.

As pop music continued to spread rapidly, it really began to build the sound that it still produces today in the 1980's. In the 1980's, pop music was known for its futuristic sound as well as use of synthesizers and other electronic instruments. Pop stars like Tina Turner and Michael Jackson overtook the music scene during this era, with their iconic fashion pieces adding spunk to their music. The new use of instruments such as new wave, electronic dance music, and hip hop were born in this era, modernizing the genre while also adding variety. The number one song of this time period was "Physical" by Olivia Newton-John, spending a total of 10 weeks at the top of the Billboard Top 100.

In the 2000's, pop culture began to rely on the output of new pop music, with artists like Britney Spears as well as groups such as Destiny's Child dominating their related sub-genres. Emo culture became a huge sensation in the 2000's, with new alternative music becoming extremely popular. The alternative rock heading was the umbrella that held many subgenres such as pop-punk, emo, nu-metal, and indie rock, each of those subgenres often being paired with the popular trending looks like Demoniac boots as well as dramatic side bangs. The contrast between songs like "In the End" by Linkin Park and "What a Girl Wants" by Christina Aguilera marked this iconic decade, giving each different subgenre a new hit song almost weekly!

The alternative scene began to calm down in the 2010's, when pop music shifted toward a more electronic and upbeat sound. Although the alternative scene wasn't as popular as it was ten years prior, it still existed, just not majorly a part of pop music trends. Artists like Ariana Grande and Justin Bieber made their hot debuts in the 2010's, reshaping pop music.

New genres like EDM and R&B changed the culture of pop music, proving that pop music is really just what's popular at the time. The hit song "Closer" by the Chainsmokers boomed all over social media apps like Musical.ly and Instagram, bringing the electropop genre to a peak that remained untouchable throughout the 2010's. Social media presence began to significantly rise during this decade, creating a new way for artists to communicate with their supporters.

Nowadays, pop music has become a mostly soft and mellow genre. Artists have started to use more analog instruments to give their music a more signature sound of the decade, differing from the 2010's heavy use of brass instruments. Artists like Billie Eilish and K-pop groups such as BTS fill the headphones of people all around the world every day. During this decade, K-pop, or Korean pop music has become hugely popular, being known for its organized choreographies and recognizable style. BTS' music video for the song "Butter" reached an incredible 108.2 million views in its first 24 hours, setting multiple Guinness World Records and stunning the globe. Slower songs that can be used for daily tasks such as studying and resting have become very popular in this decade, bringing pop music to the genre that it is today.

Since its initial creation, pop music has shifted in many different ways, from the structural aspects, the instruments used, and the genres implemented. Although there are changes in the music itself, there will always be one thing that makes pop music what it is, its ability to bring people together. The popular music of the times will be found in public places, in restaurants, on social media, and other places, and it shows why pop music is such a vital part of our society.

As an art form, pop music is a form that is created for people of all ages and backgrounds. Pop music is the connector that people can use to communicate all around the world, and its growth and change is something that is truly important to our world's history.

# A.I. Art and the Pandemic of Artistic Theft

By Casey Sanchez

What makes art so beautiful? Many would say how it looks, but artists talk of the effort and thought behind it. What is beautiful to one person can be hideous to another, yet all art is appreciated. Well, most art.

One of the most controversial usages of AI is creating pictures out of it through its algorithm. While much of the population may be accepting of this new technology, many artists would prefer for it to be shut down than allowing others to use it. This is due to the algorithm itself, using art from all over the internet and taking parts of it to create something else. This is even worse due to many paintings, sculptures, and digital creations being copyrighted, making it so the algorithms are stealing from the artists without paying any credit to the original creators.

Another problem with this is that many companies are replacing jobs with AI, leading to mass unemployment for people with graphic design and animation degrees. A newer example of this in real time is the new Coca-Cola™ Christmas advertisement, where the entire ad was created using AI instead of having something animated or filmed.

This has led people to mock and make fun of the company due to their corner-cutting actions, which has also shown other major companies the outrage against using AI for their commercials. These commercials are made through a program that bases everything off of video and photos, limiting what it can do. It can't make realistic videos aside from the initial look. What it creates also doesn't apply to physics and it creates an uncanny feel to it.

I asked Sawyer, a student at Woodside, about his opinion on AI art. "It sucks, I hate it, and the AI bros. I hate the AI bros. Most generative AI, neural-networks, takes information from other posted works, and makes something new from stolen art. Usually work can be taken from any social media platforms but some creative programs have also started to allow the works to be put into these algorithms as well." To put it simply, AI steals works that are posted online, copyrighted or not.

Artists feel as though they are being taken advantage of, their years of talents going to waste as people start to replace them with artificial art. Art is something that cannot be replicated, as everyone has a unique technique. Art comes from the soul, making it something so unique to the artist that it could never be perfectly duplicated.



# Love Online

By Elijah Cherry

The integration of the internet has changed how we can communicate, meet, and stay connected with people. Due to the accessibility of social spaces like Instagram, finding people you find interesting has never been easier. Because of these methods of communication, making friends or potentially something deeper is a possibility.

Now is this a bad thing? Is making friends on the internet even considered real friendship? I decided to ask thirty teens for their opinions on certain questions. Firstly, "Is friendship possible online & if you have experience would you share?" Secondly, "Are online relationships possible to work?" Thirdly, "Is it possible to have a long online relationship?", and finally "Would you rather have an in person relationship or online?"

All the teens agreed that online friendships are possible as well as having at least one. "I met my best friend on an art forum. We've known each other for about five years." (anonymous teen)

Teens as well as myself see friendship on the internet to be just as easy or even easier than in person. Playing games, comment sections, and even community hubs were most of the answers I gained.

Out of thirty, 73% of teens believed that non-platonic relationships are possible on the internet. "I believe that it's possible by all means but it isn't very eye-catching and I wouldn't do it personally." (Yes-anonymous teen) The majority does believe that it's possible but see potential problems within the concept. The possibility of cheating, catfishing, and the heavy trust needed caused eight of the thirty to decide no.

Longevity of relationships are important in any relationship, and surprisingly this question was very split. 56% believed it is possible but not likely. "Online relationships, if done correctly, can easily be achieved. What's needed is to be aware of the fact that your actions are less seen, for better or for worse." (Yes-anonymous teen) Almost everyone saw a lot more possible longevity in a physical relationship.

Last but not least, what do they prefer? 10% said they would rather have an online relationship. "Verbally speaking is hard for me and just being able to text helps me mentally." (favor online-anonymous teen) 90% said otherwise, favoring physical. "I'm in a long distance relationship right now but would give anything to see them and make it physical." (favor physical-anonymous teen)

The internet has definitely had an impact on social and personal life. How we interpret love and feel has also changed because of the internet. Such differing perspectives and answers from my questions proved that fact. With that being said, let your perspective decide how you feel about this topic. The point of the internet was for ideas to spread after all.





# What's Going On in the Creative Writing Magnet?

By Gracie Santrock

Here at Woodside, we have many magnet programs. Woodside offers various magnet classes, such as creative writing, theatre, art, guitar, chorus, and orchestra, as well as piano, dance, band, and communications. But there is one specific program that we'll be talking about today: the Creative Writing magnet. Let's have a quick look at what's going on in the Creative Writing program here at Woodside.

Creative Writing is a unique magnet program at Woodside High School, which revolves around the art of storytelling and learning about different genres in each class. Students in Creative Writing are also encouraged to join OUTSPOKEN, a slam poetry team that meets every Wolverine Wednesday. SPITFIRE and Rhapsodic are mandatory events that all students in the program will either attend or participate in.

SPITFIRE is one of the two mandatory events in this magnet. It takes place in November of each year inside the Woodside High School auditorium, also after school. It is basically like Rhapsodic, but it is a competitive poetry slam. Snacks and merchandise are sold to help buy supplies and fund field trips. In the event, after every student has performed, the winners for Singles and Duos will be announced, also with people who have been voted Audience Choice.

Rhapsodic is also a mandatory event in Creative Writing. It takes place in April after school in the Woodside cafeteria.

For Rhapsodic, the doors open at 4 pm and the event goes until 7 pm. Also, there are some booths that offer fun activities, like poetry on demand, but they close during the event, where students read their slam pieces. When the student goes up and leaves, the audience applauds, but during the student's performance, they snap, just like with SPITFIRE.

Students in Creative Writing are also going on field trips throughout the school year that Mrs. GMC mentions, such as the Botanic Gardens and plays and musicals. When the field trip is announced in each class, GMC will hand out permission slips. Also, GMC gives students who are going on the field trip a certain deadline for them to get all the signatures and money if the student's in good standing.

Each year, specific people are selected to join Artistic Verses, a team within the Creative Writing Magnet that goes to the Toggler Museum at CNU to learn about the art of ekphrastic poetry when they go on field trips. Also, when they are at the Toggler Museum, they also participate in competitions all across the district.

All of these are unique features that Creative Writing has to feature, from storytelling to slam poetry, to OUTSPOKEN to Rhapsodic. Creative Writing is also one of the best magnets here at Woodside High School. Would you consider joining Creative Writing to experience the fun events, or will you join another magnet program at Woodside?

