

December 2020

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Woodside E~Sports Team



The E-Sports team began their season with new players who are eager to succeed. With little to no experience, this team is working hard to climb to the top. Mr. Berry is the sponsor, with 27 years of experience playing video games. He leads this team of six with passion for the game, each one of them excited for each match to come. The members include Lynh Vo, the team's captain, Annika Hofler, their co-captain, Grant Russo, Giovanni Duran, and Trey. These players are all at different skill levels, but that is what makes them unique. Their being at different skill levels helps them to trust each other and gain teamwork skills. The Commonwealth of Virginia only has a select group of E-Sports teams. The only games that are allowed so far are League of Legends and Rocket League. Some other games the members of the league intend to play are Minecraft, Among Us, Overwatch, Rocket League and Valorant. This team meets to practice 3 times a week and they have games once a week which tends to keep them busy, especially with virtual learning. They are playing tough teams with a lot of experience; they don't expect to win every game, but as these underdogs practice with only a few months of experience and getting to know each other they are striving to win and make progress as a team.

Quick intro to League of Legends

Our school's E-Sports team mainly plays League of Legends. For those who don't know, League of Legends is a top-down team-based Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) that has two teams of five players battling each other to get to the other team's side of the map to destroy their base (The Nexus). In this game, you can choose your Champion at the beginning of the round and as you play as them throughout the match, you can eventually level them up and get better gear and skills to help aid you and your team to victory. As there are over 150 Champions to choose from, every single one has a different role, playstyle, and tactic to use while in or out of combat. With this massive number of playable characters, it's easy to see why so many people love to play the game.

About the players

Lynh Vo, our team's designated leader, has fallen into the role of top-laner/jungle-fighter, a fitting role for the team captain with how much can and will happen at the top of the map. He's been playing the game on and off for almost 9 years now, and doesn't seem to want to quit any time soon. Next, onto our co-captain, Annika Hoffler. She tends to play more champions on the cuter side while on her support role. Her choice in role is quite fitting, seeing as she enjoys helping her fellow teammates. She's been playing for about a year and a half, quickly filling the support role that she holds in the team. Trey, our next top-laner, has played for four months using the community's least favorite champion Teemo. He started playing top lane due to his captain's suggestion and has played it ever since. Moving onto our Jungle-fighter player, we have Grant who has played for 2 years on and off. He uses the crowd-controlling combo of Nunu & Willump due to their ease and tankiness. Finally, we have Giovanni, our newest player of LoL who started merely one month ago and utilizes Miss Fortune's range to get damage in from afar.

About the coaches

Coach Berry, who's played League of Legends for about 3 months now, is skilled in other games where you have to think quickly and move even quicker. With his experience as a Street Fighter 5 player and a skilled chess competitor, it isn't hard to see how he can translate what he's learned from these vastly different titles into LoL.

The team as a whole

These students dedicate a lot of time and effort into the game while also managing the sudden change of switching to online learning along with wading through a pandemic. This team has definitely come a long way.

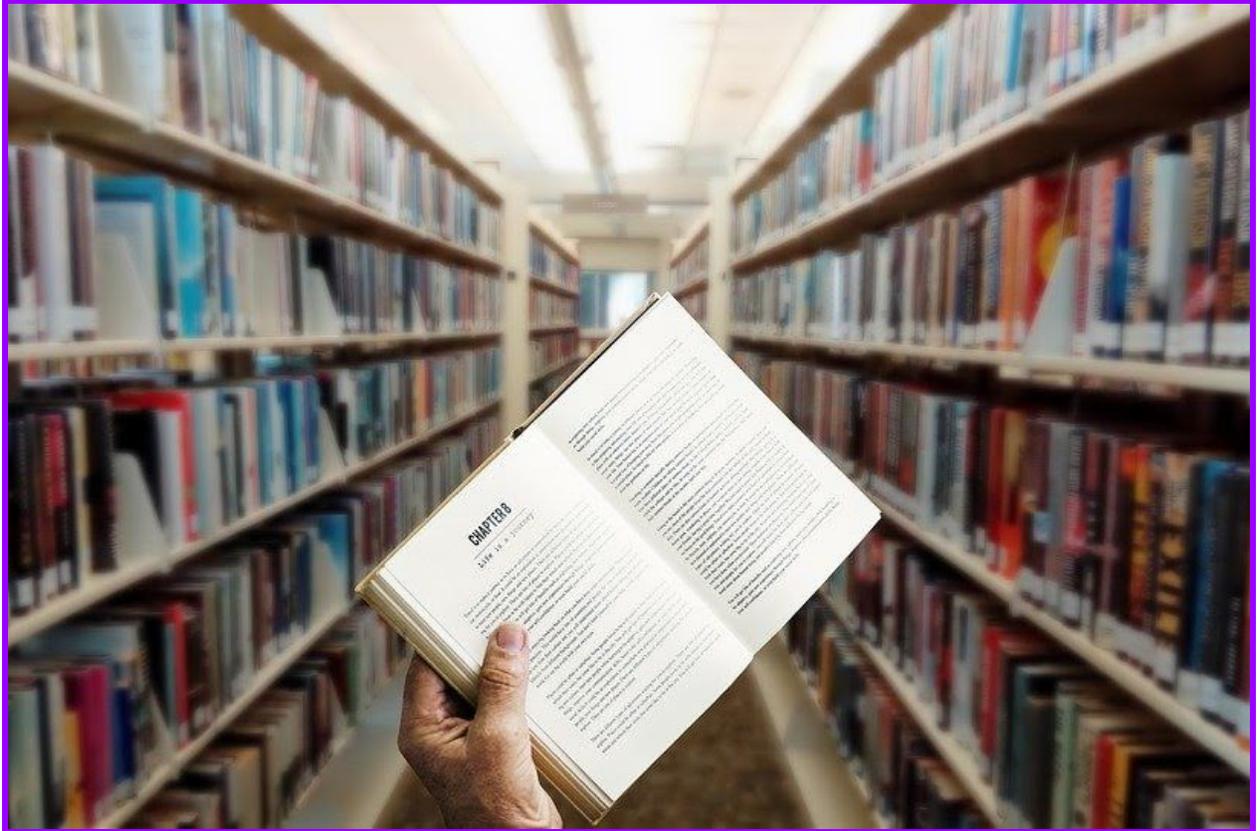
Mental Health During Virtual Learning



Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities and can cope with the normal stresses of life. Having the same routine five days out of the week, for ten months, and a two month break is something we were used to, something we coped with. But something we never experienced nor had to deal with was about to change that. When we first heard about Coronavirus, my peers and I took it as a joke. We didn't take it seriously at first until we found out we weren't going back. Going from waking up at five in the morning and sitting in school for eight hours, and interacting with friends to waking up whenever you felt like it and getting on your computer to do school seemed like a slight adjustment and better altogether. The staying at home and being around the same people, not being able to go outside without wearing a mask, having distance between one another, being cautious, or not being able to go out at all affected some harder than others. For some, school was their getaway, where they were able to not be pressured by responsibilities like cleaning or taking care of their siblings or even parents. School kept kids from being stuck in their room all day with their thoughts. It helped being around others to get their minds off of things.

I asked some of my Woodside students how their mental health changed overtime. Their responses were mostly the same. They were doing good before everything happened. The new way we started doing school made things stressful. I asked them the pros and cons of virtual learning, and to sum it up they said that they liked the interaction with other people and their friends, and that they didn't like waking up early and maintaining time management. Some of the pros were seeing different sceneries And interacting with different people. One of them talked about how they couldn't play sports anymore and it upset them not being able to see their team, and how they practiced for it just to not play. Some feel as if it is better to go back to school to better kids' mental state, but some say they'd rather be safe than sorry.

A Virtual Library



Did you know you can still check out books from the library this year? *Destiny Discover* allows you to put books on hold for you to pick up at school. Go to “Library Book Check Out During Virtual Learning” from either the Woodside home page in “News” or the Woodside Library home page for instructions. When the hold is received by Mrs. Torrez, she will collect your books and check them out. When it’s ready to be picked up, the library staff will send you an email letting you know. **From 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. on Thursdays**, you can pick up your books from Woodside. When you’re on your way, call the librarian at **757-886-7530 ext. 61601 or ext. 6100**. There will be a library cart in the A-hall outside the auditorium entrance with your books. You can also ask the librarian about picking up your library materials from another NNPS school. Keep in mind that the delivery could be delayed in the process of being sent to another location. To return your library books, bring them to the school **from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Thursdays** and place them on the library cart labeled “Book Return”. Enjoy your books!

If you need assistance, you can contact:

Mrs. McDonough at: deborah.mcdonough@nn.k12.va.us

Or Mrs. Torrez at: louanna.torrez@nn.k12.va.us

Emotional Wellbeing

How has quarantine and online learning affected you? For many, it's been a more stressful environment than we initially pictured. It's hard to set boundaries of when to work and when to make time for friends and family. For this reason, we've asked the school counselors how we can still keep an upbeat state of mind while living under the reign of Covid-19. It's very stressful for everyone, including the teachers and counselors. But there are some great ways to combat those stresses and live partially normal. According to Ms. Simon, the best way to deal with stress is to acknowledge the fact that it's there, try to figure out what caused it, and practice healthy activities that help you relieve it. Once you know what stresses you out, think of ways to prevent that, and if you are already strained, there are some ways to decompress. For example, going for a walk or exercising, listening to music, reading a book, journaling, doing a breathing exercise, and talking to someone or venting to a friend. Sometimes our school counselors get stressed because they can't connect with students as easily and one of the ways that they cope with the tension is by setting boundaries for work and free time. Having a set schedule is one of the easiest things to do to help balance your workload. Set a schedule that works for you and try not to procrastinate. As much fun as it may be to cram two weeks worth of work into four hours before it's due, that only adds to the amount of strain you put on yourself. Some ways to help you stop procrastinating would be to commit to the task, promise yourself a reward when you complete the task, minimize distractions, break down big assignments into small chunks you can work on throughout the week, try to stay organized, take breaks, get the hard stuff done first, and set achievable goals. We understand it might be hard to find time for friends and family, but hopefully with these tips on relieving stress and stopping procrastination, it'll be easier to find time to do what you love.



Food Drive



The food drive for the local food bank was organized by Peter Mercier, a music teacher at Menchville High. He spent a lot of time organizing this event and worked with different schools to gain an abundant amount of canned food and money. In total he worked with 9 different schools: Achievable Dream Elementary, Newsome Park Elementary, Heritage High School, Crittenden Middle School, Warwick High School, Kiln Creek Elementary, Denbigh High School, Denbigh Early Childhood Center, Woodside High School, and Richneck Elementary. These schools were chosen based on the locations throughout the city to be collection sites. Another site was the admin building in front of Todd stadium. They were able to collect just short of 3,000 pounds of food and over \$4,000 to donate to the food bank. Woodside in particular was able to raise \$640.00, the third most. All combined they donated 18,000 meals to the food bank. This experience was overwhelming for Mr. Mercier but he enjoyed it because in the end he helped so many people get meals.

When asked how long they had been doing the food drive, he shockingly said this was the first time they have ever done or tried doing a city-wide fundraiser. The past six years they have done an annual Thanksgiving food drive which usually took place in November but this time it was done in October. Last year they made a challenge in which the homeroom who brought in the most food would win a free Chick-Fil-A breakfast. The food drive was something that already existed, and while speaking with the NNPS Youth Development Supervisor, Bridget Adams, she asked him to do the fundraiser again this year.

Mr. Mercier got asked to do the food drive because he had done it the year before. In previous years Menchville had done 6 consecutive years of fundraisers for Thanksgiving which was held for homeroom classes when we were at school in person. But with COVID-19 they had to make big changes to fundraise. They instead did a city wide food drive and individual schools set up their own webpages to donate. Mr. Mercier believes it is important to donate to food drives because it helps provide meals to families that are less fortunate.

Plans For The Yearbook



This year's yearbook publication, *Legacy*, is titled "Zooming Through the Year," and will be part of Woodside High School's 25th anniversary. The process of preparing and putting together a yearbook has been greatly affected by the pandemic. According to the yearbook editor-in-chief, Skye Olsen, photos have been the biggest challenge so far. Many seniors have gone to take their photos using various photographers throughout the community, but the total number of portraits on file is still low. Mr. DePrinzio, Woodside yearbook advisor and English teacher, is taking pictures during special events when possible. This poses a challenge for them, since the hope is that the majority of Woodside students will be able to be included in the yearbook. Many different solutions are being employed, such as sharing your photos digitally. Mr.

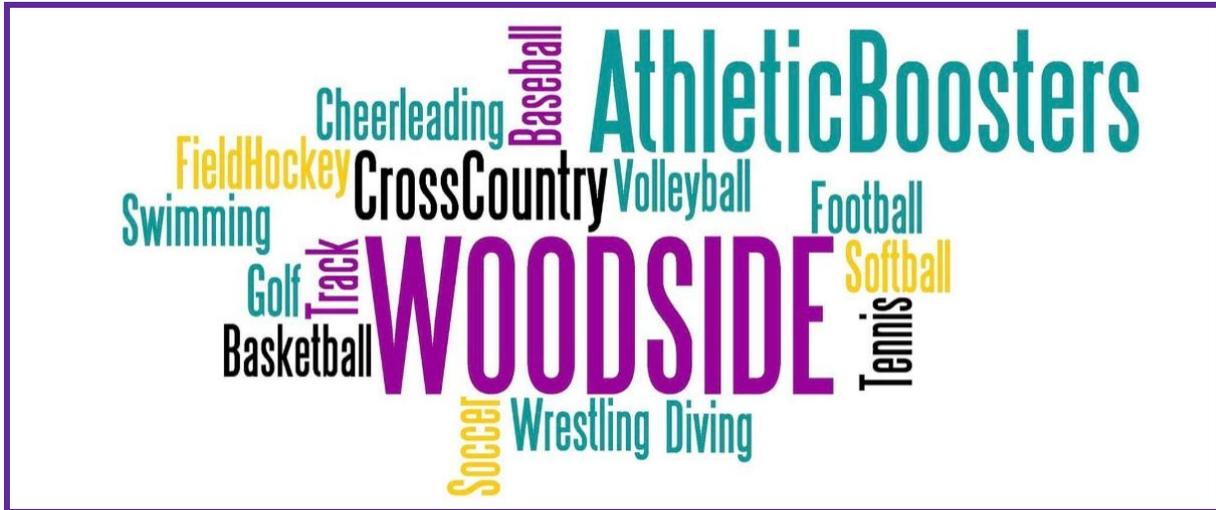
DePrinzio encourages everyone to download the ImageShare app and digitally submit any photos taken on cell phones to be used in the yearbook. The ImageShare and EZ-Pix apps and instructions will be shared through social media, e-mail, and the Woodside website. The yearbook staff has given senior quotes some thought, and they have a plan. Details will be forthcoming. Another obstacle the yearbook committee faces this year is whether or not there will be sports seasons, which are usually a large portion of the yearbook publication. Yearbooks are on sale. However, there is only a limited amount. As of right now, we are told there are 275 copies left. The pre-order price is \$65 but it will go up to \$75 after February 19. In June, the price for on-site purchases will be \$85. Senior dedication pages, nameplate personalization, and icons are all available for additional cost. Even though being a part of the staff is hard, they still really like being able to work on a project as important as this. They enjoy being able to make something that will be looked back on for years.

Photo 1: Wolverine with a Mask by Brian DePrinzio

Photo 2: English teachers meet in the cafeteria for pre-service week in August by Brian DePrinzio



Plans for Sports and Athletics



As Covid-19 continues to spread around the globe and affect the world’s health, educational, social, and financial institutions, it treats the sports industry no differently. Many sporting events around the world have been postponed or cancelled. It seems as though the sports industry has been thrown into a frenzy and many of us ask, “How do athletic departments of High Schools plan to approach Covid-19?” Well we’ve talked to our athletic director, Paul Macklin, here at Woodside High and asked about the approach to the sports year of 2020-2021.

According to Mr. Macklin, Winter sports such as Basketball, Swim/Dive, Indoor Track, and Wrestling are expected to continue throughout the school year, even if school stays virtual, unless Newport News Public School System decides otherwise. Also our VHSL academic teams, such as Forensics, Debate, Scholastic Bowl, and Act One will virtually participate in their activities throughout the Winter season and our Esports team has been virtually competing since October and will continue until January. For all our football fans and athletes who were wondering if there was going to be a football season this year, as of right now football is scheduled to start on February 4th. All of the other fall sports are scheduled to resume February 15th and all spring sports, April 12th unless the Governor of Virginia or the Newport News Public School System cancels sports throughout Newport News for the safety of our players. The uncertainty of sports for this year pushes athletic directors to build a schedule for next year and constantly check on the welfare of athletes for the upcoming seasons. There’s just so much that we still don’t know yet, but hopefully when we do it’ll be for the better of our sports teams here at Woodside.

A Call for Social Justice



Whether you want to help make a change in your community or need a safe space to have open discussions, the Social Justice Club is here to help. With support from Mr. Brayboy and Mrs. Weyland-Rodenbo, this student-run club is opening eyes, minds, and hearts to change across our world. The Social Justice Club is supposed to educate and empower students, bring awareness to societal issues, and as a member myself, I can say that that's exactly what this club does. This club gives us the opportunity to have our voices heard, recognized, and understood by others. We tackle tough subjects and learn to use empathy and respect to help us acknowledge each other's differences. We're working to not only unite us as students, but also as a community; to open discussions between lawmakers and students, and to welcome communication between teachers and the students they teach. So let your voice be heard and join the Social Justice Club.

Email Mrs. Weyland-Rodenbo for more information at: amber.weylan@nn.k12.va.us