

THE BLACKSONIAN

REPORTING THE NEWS AT BHS SINCE 1927.



SUMMER REVIEW

Mason Lydia

The months leading up to August have been remarkably busy. Let us take a moment to look at the most cultivating moments of Summer 2023. On May 2nd, 2023, at 12:01 am PDT, the Writers Guild of America went on strike. Over 11,500 screenwriters took part in the strike to get residuals from streaming media. This left writers and actors asking studios for higher pay and tighter rules about the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in creative projects. We at *The Blacksonian* give our support to writers everywhere; our favorite shows could not be possible without their talented minds, and we fully believe they should be paid for their hard work.

In June, it seemed the most eventful to start here is the most watched story that happened. On June 18th at 9:45, a submarine called the Titan that held Stockton Rush, Shazada Dawood and his son Suleman Dawood, Hamish Harding, and Paul-Henri Nargeloet; communication was lost, and the following morning a search team was dispatched to find the submarine and hopefully everyone on board. But sadly on June 22 at 11:45 AM EST, it was announced that remains of the Titan were found, and the search was called off. Our thoughts and prayers go out to each family member and friend of every passenger.

In July, there was a magnificent event that happened on July 14. The Biden administration announced that about 804,000 borrowers will have their student loan debt erased, which amounts to 84 billion dollars. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said in a written statement, "For far too long, borrowers fell through the cracks of a broken system that failed to keep accurate track of their progress towards forgiveness." This is a wonderful opportunity for people to not be too stressed by their student debt and it should increase people's desire to get a higher education.

WELCOME FRESHMEN

Carmen Mullinax

The Blacksburg High Newspaper interviewed a few of our new freshmen. The first question was how the transition from middle to high school went: Alyssa Elliott responded with, "The transition from the middle to here was kind of weird, but it was a good move up." Ethan Earls responded, "In my opinion, the transition was not too bad." Kayla responded, "The transition was disappointing."

The next question asked was about our rules compared to middle school: Alyssa Elliott responded, "Yes, the rules here at the high school are a little different and stricter, but at our current age, I feel they are fair." Ethan Earls responded, "In my opinion, the rules here at the high school compared to that of the middle school are different but easier." Kayla responded with a simple, "Yes."

The last question was about expectations for high school: Alyssa Elliott responded, "When I thought of high school, I expected it to be more awkward and that none of my friends would be in my classes." Ethan Earls responded, "My expectations for high school were to be able to do whatever I wanted. I did not expect to have so much work because I saw high schoolers acting "COOL" all the time." Kayla responded, "I personally thought things would be different."



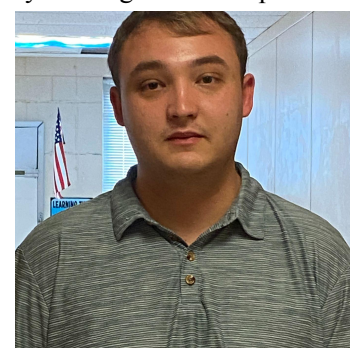
Concerning their opinions of our students in Blacksburg, they gave the following answers. Mr. Erwin responded, "Compared to some of the other schools I've taught at, Blacksburg students are the best of them all." Coach Thorton responded, "The students here at Blacksburg have potential. They are very well behaved and I enjoy getting to know my students." Coach Sims responded, "I have been impressed with the mannerism here in Blacksburg. The students are very respectful, and not a lot of disrespect is seen around. The students seem to be receptive."

When asked whether they would accept an offer to teach at another school, Mr. Erwin responded, "No, it has been a dream to work at my home school." Coach Thorton responded with a simple "No." Coach Sims responded, "The only reason I would leave Blacksburg is if given the opportunity by a college to teach sports."

NEW TEACHERS

William Barnhill

We talked to some of the new teachers here in Blacksburg High School about their choices and opinions on our school. The following responses were given by the teachers when initially asked why they chose to teach at Blacksburg. Mr. Erwin responded, "I guess the reason I chose Blacksburg to teach at was because I graduated from here, so I wanted to come back home." Coach Thorton responded, "Blacksburg seemed like a cool school to teach at. It's the type of place where people have your back, a family-type school." Coach Sims responded, "I chose Blacksburg because I coach the boys' basketball team, and at Ewing Middle School, I worked with Mr. Mullinax, so I saw it as an opportunity to work under great administrators."



Mr. Josh Erwin



Coach Kerrigan Thornton



Coach William Sims

ACADEMICS

NEWS AND EVENTS

SCHOOLGY

Mason Lydia

Blacksburg High School recently switched from using Canvas as its online management system to a new platform, Schoology. Schoology is a learning management system for schools and colleges that enables its users to create, manage, and share assignments and resources.

We interviewed a few educators to find out their thoughts on the switch to Schoology. "There was little training," Mrs. Satterwhite stated, "and I still can't log into Schoology. I have to email Mrs. Threadgill about my issues almost every day." Mrs. Miller had a different take on it, saying, "It is another thing that goes with education that's always changing and challenging people. We as educators are also lifelong learners like we encourage our students to be." This will be a new change for Blacksburg, and we hope to become used to the change to Schoology and grow to love it.



HOSA

Matthew Merrell

HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) is a student-led organization made up of high schoolers who have had one or more health science classes. Students who join have weekly meetings to discuss what competition they will be competing in state-wide. Before competitions, students will have after-school practice for their genre of competition. They also meet to help out the community by volunteering and helping run concession stands for local games.

I had the pleasure to sit down with the vice president of our school HOSA's team and reporter for our state team, Paris Mayes. When Mayes was about to be announced as state reporter she felt "very nervous but also very proud of myself because everyone was looking up to me. HOSA has helped me talk to people and get me out of my comfort zone" she stated. "When joining HOSA, expect a fun environment, expect to do new things, and expect to meet new people." She also recommended everyone join HOSA and if you don't "you're missing out." You can now sign up for HOSA with Mrs. Miller, For questions or if you have an interest in joining HOSA, email Mrs. Miller at: janeeka.miller@cherokee1.org.



The BHS HOSA Chapter at one of its competitions this past spring.

FORTNITE

Christopher Rogers

Fortnite Battle Royale is the game that has revived and redefined the battle royale genre and ignited lots of new games, namely Apex Legends and Call of Duty: Warzone. It is extremely popular with children and younger teens, with one of the main benefits being it is a free-to-play game. You can play with up to 3 friends and you work together and strategize to get the win or "Was it known in the Fortnite community? Keep in mind that it is 6 years old, it has gone through a lot of players, changes, updates, developers, and even the community has changed.

Let's talk about the community. It is immensely popular with children, but that does not mean only children play it. Adults, especially content creators, play the game too. The content creators make videos on it which in turn causes more kids to play the game because they think it looks fun. But keep in mind that more YouTubers and Twitch streamers add to the community by introducing players into the game, which makes the community bigger, and the problem with that is toxicity. Some people are unable to purchase cosmetics in the game, and they then are bullied by those who do, which creates a toxic community and causes some players to abandon the game.

Next, let us talk about Epic Games. There have been 5 ½ years' worth of updates, removing and adding a lot of things that people do not agree with. Epic Games also owns a store called the Epic Games Store, and they are greedy with their money, trying to get exclusives so people can only buy specific games in that store. The majority of the changes they make to the game are done so in order to increase their revenue, not the happiness of their customers.

The good old days are gone, but Fortnite Battle Royale is still one of the most popular games, which is surprising compared to its early days. It used to be a game that kids of all ages and even adults loved, but over time it's changed or removed a lot of what people loved and it's a shell of what it once was.

THANK YOU

We would like to express our gratitude to every one of our amazing custodial staff for helping our school achieve the honor of being the cleanest in the Cherokee County District. We are incredibly grateful that they are all a part of Blacksburg High School. When you see any of them in the halls, say thank you. Keep up the excellent work!



BHS Custodial Staff - the best in Cherokee County School District!

IRON CITY FESTIVAL

Brandon Martin

The Iron City Festival has been a tradition in Blacksburg since 2006. Since last year's festival was canceled due to weather, this year's is the main township event, with the festival "drawing thousands of people to enjoy" each year. The festival is on the second Saturday of September, which will start at 11 AM and go on until 5 PM. Each year, games and activities can be found, along with food trucks, and other types of vendors are also available.

The festival is organized by Blacksburg Business Association, which has also begun a new tradition "Food Truck Thursdays." Blacksburg High School vocal ensemble will be performing at the festival. This ensemble is made up of 15 high school students, who have excelled in choir. The Iron City Festival is a staple of Blacksburg Culture. We hope to see you there!

CHORUS

Gabriel Davis

According to chorus teacher Mrs. Martin, the Blacksburg High School chorus class expects to have a successful year this year. Mrs. Martin believes that, "As a musician, you're always improving." She has moved students around to see how well they blend and how their chorus chemistry works together. There are many great singers, many of whom have significant experience, and just as many who have no experience but high potential. Martin says that even though new students don't have as much experience, they "don't lack determination and dedication one bit."

I asked students what they are doing to prepare for each event. Casey Smith stated, "Sight reading and listening to instructions is very high and important on my list of priorities involving preparations." Fellow student Egypt Camp stated, "That song review was very important in my eyes."

Both students were also asked how well they thought their section was coming along. Smith said, "My section's chemistry is coming together very well and I think that, if any section will be the weakest link, it will be mine." Camp told us, "My section is taking it slow and preparing as we should, and I think my section has a strong connection." We are all looking forward to how well the chorus program is destined to do in any and every event they have."



SPORTS

VOLLEYBALL

Josie Brown

There is a lot of excitement with the upcoming Volleyball Season. Head Coach Tiffany Mayes seems very positive about this new season. "We have a good bit of returning skilled Varsity and JV players who are hungry to earn some wins. The players have been working very hard in the off-season," states Coach Mayes.

Coach Mayes continued the interview stating, "I feel very confident in my players. We are small but mighty. Every lady is ready to put in the work, has a great attitude, and most of all, has a heart." The seniors for this year consist of Ella McClain and Savannah Miller. Coach Mayes goes on to say that volleyball "is a game that not only requires physical skills but it also requires mental toughness. Also, the offense is great and fun to watch, but defense is what will win the game." The captains for Varsity this year will be Senior Outside Hitter - Ella McClain and Junior Setter - Paris Mayes. The Captains for JV are Sophomore Right Side Hitter - Andie Ammons and Sophomore Setter - Alayna Secrest.

When asked who the hardest competitor is, Coach Mayes advised, "Last season, Liberty was our toughest opponent, but Chesnee seems to be our biggest rival." Come out and support your Lady Wildcats Volleyball teams. There are sure to be some exciting games for our Wildcats.



BHS Wildcats Volleyball team huddled up discussing plays.

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT

Christopher Rogers

Paris Mayes is the student-athlete spotlight for this week. She is a junior and co-captain of the Blacksburg High School Lady Wildcats Varsity Volleyball. When we asked how long she had been participating in sports, she replied, "I've been playing since seventh grade." We also asked what position she plays on her team. She has stated that she plays the role of "setter," which is crucial to the volleyball team's offense. When asked what motivated her to play the sport, she responded, "I like playing because it's fun and not as mental as other sports." When asked if she had any advice for volleyball players, she replied that the most crucial thing to keep in mind is to not "let the ball hit the ground." When asked what she enjoys most about the sport, she responded, "I love the friendships and connections I've made."



Lady Wildcats Co-Captain Paris Mayes holding her volleyball awards.

COLORGUARD

Chloe Earls

This year The Blacksburg Wildcat Marching Band show is "Cross Roads." This show looks at westward expansion and the travails settlers had to overcome in the movement west. Their first contest is on September 23 at Boiling Springs High School. Shane Dixon, the band director, says, "I'm excited and can't wait for it to begin." Band members are confident this year about their show. Maddy Satterwhite stated, "I feel as if we have an opportunity to do well this season. I feel that if everyone puts in 100% effort in practice, we will do very well." Anna Lafrancis stated, "I am decently confident about this year because we have lots of hardworking students and an amazing staff." The BHS Band and Colorguard are ready for the contest and can't wait to blow the judges away!

A lot of people have questioned whether it will be different from last year's performance. Shane Dixon said, "Every year is different. The new band kids come in while the old band kids mature and grow." The band has gotten a little smaller, but they sure are mighty. Maddy Satterwhite stated, "Yes, there is a difference in band this year, and with that comes new strengths and weaknesses we didn't have last year." This year the band got a good amount of new people, but that doesn't stop them. Anna Lafrancis replied, "Yes, this season will be very different from last season because we lost a lot of seniors, so we are having trouble rebuilding the band and strengthening our beginners." The band lost a lot of seniors and their talents, but they will overcome this problem.

The question asked repeatedly is whether this year BHS will beat Ninety-six. Ninety-Six band has beaten Blacksburg many times in the past, including taking the title as first in the state last year. Blacksburg came in a close second. Shane Dixon commented, "I would love for us to beat Ninety-Six after so many years of losing to them. I would love for that to happen." The band has a lot of work ahead. Maddy Satterwhite claims, "I don't know how the state will play out, but again, if we put out 100% effort every day in every aspect of our performances, then we will have an outstanding chance." The band has a lot of work ahead of them as we cheer them on from the side. We hope that they do wonderfully this year and achieve their goals as a whole.

CAR DROP OFF

On the morning of August 18th, the Blacksburg High School Football Wildcats went to Blacksburg Elementary School to greet the little Wildcats. They showed up bright and early, with huge smiles on their faces, ready to help them out of their cars and into the school. They did this in preparation for the game against Buford. All the little Wildcats were happy to see our boys greet them for school.



BHS football player greeting a little Wildcat.

FOOTBALL

William Barnhill

A new school year means new sporting seasons, and we are interested in hearing from people about how they feel about the upcoming sports season. The following is what Cameron Cobb, Zion Harris, and Josh Sims, three of the football team's players, and Coach Batchler had to say about this year's campaign. Concerning the question on their new plays and team spread. Coach Batchler responded, "The team's layout this season has been altered. We have been run-heavy since Coach Turner left. Our hope is for Josh to show his colors as the quarterback. Although we will still run the ball, the formations will be altered." The same question was asked to some players on the teams. Cameron Cobb responded, "Since Coach B, we have had more playtime." Josh Sims answered, "We have more shots at playtime with Coach B." And Zion Harris stated, "The layout of Blacksburg's team is different from Gaffney."

The next question asked was how the team felt about the players. Coach B responded, "We had a very good camp experience." Cameron Cobb responded, "This year we have more seniors, though the new players will be given their time to shine through." Josh Sims stated, "Our team has the best quarterback in the whole state. Our defense team prefers blitz plays." And Zion Harris replied, "Our team is strong this year."

The team provided the following answers in response to the final question regarding regions, which questioned if they thought it was possible. Coach B responded, "With Abbeville in regions, the probability is high. The team hopefully does have a shot, though this year's schedule is fairly tough." Cameron Cobb responded, "Yes, this is very possible. If there was a national for High School, we would surely win." Josh Sims responded, "Yes, we 100% have a shot at regions this year." Zion Harris, being new, went with a simple "Yes" as his answer.



BHS Varsity Football Head Coach Josh Batchler smiling to indicate he feels good about this season.

BHS ATHLETIC PAGE

Make sure to check out the Blacksburg High School Athletics Facebook page to get weekly updates, upcoming games, scores, and much more. The page sends out the upcoming games for the week telling you everything you need to know. If you want to find out the exact score of a game, they usually post the score in a matter of hours. If you want to be more involved in our school's athletics, follow the page.

LIFE STYLES

MENTAL HEALTH

Caylee Stroup

We're not adults, but we don't think of ourselves as children. So why are we hit-head on with feelings of despair, sadness, depression, fear, anger, or even hopelessness? It's all a combination of different things we are constantly affected by daily. Teen mental health issues are a lot more common than most of the adults in our life may think. We face challenges too. Shouldn't we be heard?

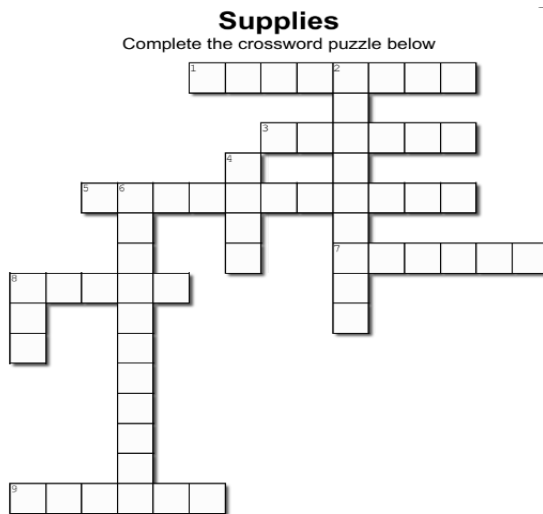
Our surroundings have a huge impact on us as teenagers. A good number of teenagers have parents that are no longer together. Some of us are being raised by other family members. Some teens live with a toxic family that's constantly fighting. How does that impact us? It can most definitely take away the feeling of security and consistency early on.

In addition to home issues, we all want to feel accepted. That's not always the case in middle or high school. Friends, relationships, partners, and fellow students in our class are always changing. Our generation and culture are constantly changing. We are constantly trying to adapt. We scroll and scroll as we feel the urge to just keep up with everyone on social media. Our minds are still developing, so it's hard to handle feelings and rejection by social media.

Teen mental health should be taken more seriously. Mental health is just as important as physical health. We can't handle the pressure we face alone on a daily basis. Efforts are being taken to help us fight the fight. One effort in particular - the Green Bandana Project - has been instituted at BHS this year. For more information on this project and how it works, please reach out to Mrs. Janeeka Miller in room A104.



CROSSWORD

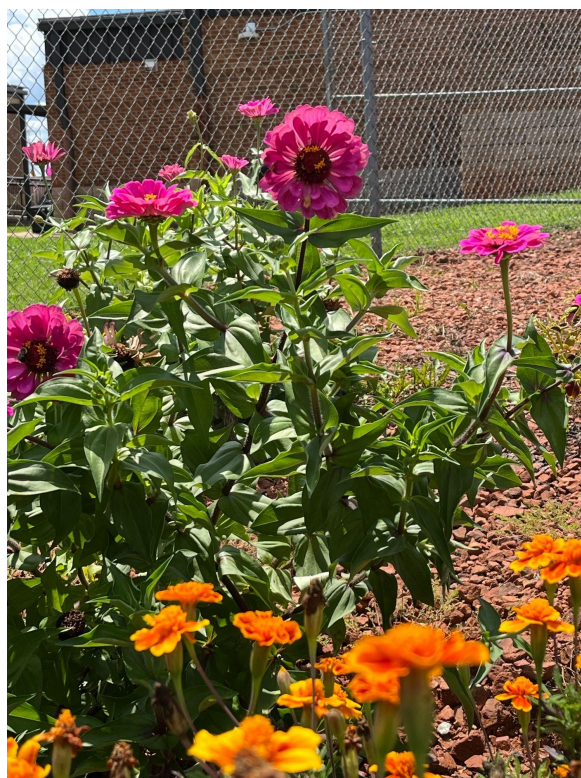


Across

1. things every student needs
3. erasable
5. writes in vibrant colors
7. a book to store all your papers
8. needed to write notes on
9. used to fixed mistakes

Down

2. used to store food
4. used to stick things together
6. a piece of paper used for studying terms
8. writes in permanent ink



Flowers grown and cultivated by Mr. Hammett's students at BHS.

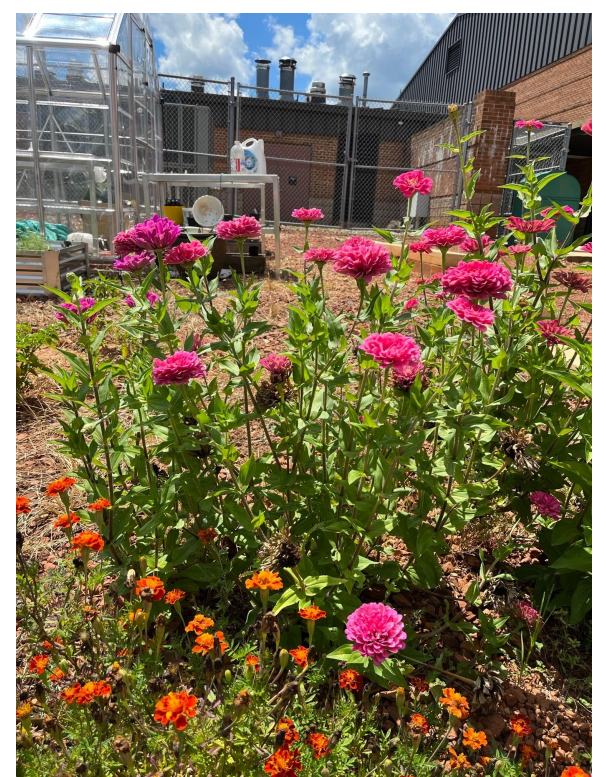
HAMMETT'S COMMUNITY GARDEN

Emma Barton

The wonderful garden we have at Blacksburg High School is thriving in the best way possible, but it's only the beginning. Originally, the garden was just a few plants being scattered around the school, but now it's progressing further. Those few plants became a tilled lot, a greenhouse, and donations from different companies wanting to see our school thrive. Coach Hammett, the teacher that had the idea for the garden, thought that the garden would be a good idea to give back to the community plus it would be something to get the students involved in.

Students from both the middle and high school have been helping with the garden and members from the community have been helping with these beautiful plants too. Coach Hammett would love for the garden to have more involvement with the elementary and primary schools. The students that have been helping in the garden so far have loved it and tended to the plants admirably. The students and a few members of the community are in charge of maintaining this magnificent garden, aiding during breaks, and assisting with moving the plants to the garden.

Coach Hammett wants to show the students and community that he's not afraid to take chances and try new things. He has used garlic bulbs to grow garlic, and he has educated others on how lemon balm and marigolds are a good, natural way to keep away mosquitoes. Coach Hammett even plans to grow pumpkins for this fall.



Flowers grown and cultivated by Mr. Hammett's students at BHS.

Editorial and Staff

The summer has passed in the blink of an eye, and by the time we opened them, the fall semester has already started. Even though it is the fall term, the temperature still resembles the peak of summer. But instead of focusing on the summer heat, let's consider the environment and mindset of the upcoming fall semester.

The fall semester is all about new beginnings. New classrooms, classmates, friends, and most importantly, new possibilities are introduced. If the previous year was not the best, you are given another chance. Your behavior, schoolwork, and even how you come across to other people can change for the better.

Freshmen, put your middle school persona behind you and begin acting more mature, as expected by your teachers and more experienced classmates. Do not give up sophomores and juniors. You may feel like you will never graduate, but the time will fly by. Seniors, you might feel conflicted about the upcoming new school year - excited to leave the early algebra classes and the crowded halls - but you might also be sad - saying goodbye to the hallways where you grew into adults, to high school friends, and to your favorite teachers. Regardless of your grade level and whatever feelings you may be experiencing with the new year, keep trying and do your best.

The Blacksonian is the student-written, edited, and published newspaper of Blacksburg High School in Blacksburg, SC. For information concerning the publication please contact Mr. Blackburn or one of the editors.



Editor

Kayleigh Triplett

Staff Writers

William Barnhill

Josie Brown

Emma Barton

Gabriel Davis

Chloe Earls

Jordan Evans

Konstantin Foster

Mason Lydia

Brandon Martin

Matthew Merrell

Carmen Mullinax

Christopher Rogers

Grace Stiles

Caylee Stroupe

Advisor

Mr. Doug B. Blackburn, Jr.

Ms. Brooke McAfee

